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THE ATTEMPT.

Gareth and Lynette.

THE new volume which the Laureate has given to the world contains two poems, the second of which, *The Last Tournament*, was first published some months ago in the pages of a magazine. It is therefore to *Gareth and Lynette*, the first of the two Idylls, and that which gives its name to the book, that we turn with the greatest interest, as being entirely new to us.

The place of this Idyll in Mr Tennyson's great Arthurian epic, is, he informs us, immediately after *The Coming of Arthur*. The story is therefore taken from the beginning of the history of the Round Table, and the scene is laid in the early morning of King Arthur's greatness, when the sun that was to set so darkly and sadly was still mounting up and brightening towards its noon-day splendour.

Arthur had come to his kingly place in the strange mysterious way described in the previous poem, and was gradually convincing or conquering his opponents, and proving his right to kingly power by kingly deeds, driving back the heathen from the borders, punishing the wrong-doers, and righting the oppressed within the land—striving with all his might to found for his people a kingdom of truth, and justice, and purity, in which he should rule only as the servant and representative of "the deathless King, who died for men." And he was drawing to himself by an irresistible attraction, all the true and noble hearts in his kingdom, and forming them into "that fellowship of goodliest knights," who were to be instruments along with him in his great work,—men

> "sworn to vows
> Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
> And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
> And uttermost obedience to the king."

So Arthur himself describes his knights to the young hero of the idyll, Gareth, who was longing to join himself to that goodly fellowship.

In the story of Gareth we have what we may call one specimen given us out of many of the working of that influence which Arthur exercised in the early times of his reign, when, by a mighty spell, he drew all noble young souls to himself, with a longing to serve him, and follow him, and become like him, and strive along with him for the right and against the wrong.

Gareth is a king's son,

> "The last tall son of Lot and Bellicent,
> And tallest"—

kept inactive at home, when his brothers have gone to Arthur's court, by his mother's fond and fearful love for her youngest child, but longing to leave the nest—the cage, as it seemed to his eager spirit,

> "to sweep
> In ever-highering eagle-circles up
> To the great sun of glory, and thence swoop
> Down upon all things base, and dash them dead,
> A knight of Arthur, working out his will
> To cleanse the world."

Bellicent at last yields to her son's prayers, but under one condition, by fulfilling which he is to prove his obedience and his love to her, and also to convince her that his wish is no passing boyish fancy. She tells him—

> "Thou shalt go disguised to Arthur's hall,
> And hire thyself to serve for meats and drinks
> Among the scullions and the kitchen-knaves,
> And those that hand the dish across the bar.
> Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any one.
> And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and a day."

Bellicent's thought was that "her own true Gareth was too princely-proud" so to degrade himself, and that thus she might keep her boy at home with her after all. But Gareth cheerfully accepted the condition, and, with two companions, "that still had tended on him from his birth," left his mother's house, and set forth on his way to Arthur's court at Camelot.

That magic-built city of enchantment sometimes shone before them in the morning sun, and sometimes seemed to vanish altogether; and when they reached the great gate, wrought by Merlin's art with sculptures of weird and wondrous beauty that seemed to move as they looked on them, they met an aged bard, who warned them of the

glamour that would come over them if once they set foot within the city. His two companions are afraid, but Gareth, doubting only because of the "one white lie" to which his promise to his mother compelled him, yet purposing to make good amends for that by his after deeds, presses cheerfully and boldly on through the streets of the city towards Arthur's hall.

> "And ever and anon a knight would pass
> Outward, or inward to the hall: his arms
> Clashed; and the sound was good to Gareth's ear.
> And out of bower and casement shyly glanced
> Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of love;
> And all about a healthful people stept
> As in the presence of a gracious king."

Such was the royal city in the fresh bright morning of Arthur's reign.

Entering the great hall, Gareth hears a voice, and sees

> "the splendour of the presence of the King,
> Throned, and delivering doom."

When other suppliants have been heard, and have received justice, Gareth comes forward, and makes his request to be allowed to serve in the royal kitchen for a year and a day. It is granted, and he is handed over to the charge of Sir Kay the seneschal, who is to be his master.

> "A goodly youth, and a goodlier boon,"

the king says of him, in granting his request, and Lancelot, standing by, and observing all keenly, tells Sir Kay there is some mystery, for this is surely a noble youth; but Sir Kay, "the most ungentle knight in Arthur's hall," takes no heed, and treats his new "kitchen-knave" roughly and harshly. But Gareth does all his menial tasks well and cheerfully and with a noble grace, as becomes a king's son, and wins the hearts of all his companions.

His time of servitude, however, does not last long, for when a month has passed, Bellicent relents, and lets Arthur know the truth; and so Gareth is again brought face to face with the king, and seeks admittance into the fellowship of his knights. This is granted him, and Arthur also consents that he shall have the first quest, and that till he shall have shown his powers on that quest, and so made a name for himself, his name shall be concealed, known only to the king, and to his "noblest brother and truest man" Lancelot.

The quest comes that same day. Lynette, a beautiful and high-born damsel, comes seeking aid for her sister Lyonors,

kept a prisoner in her castle by four lawless knights, in order to compel her to marry the greatest of them, who but delays carrying out his purpose by force till Lancelot shall be sent to fight with him as Lady Lyonors' champion, whom he trusts to overthrow, and so wed the fair lady with the greater glory. Lynette, therefore, asks that Lancelot may be sent. But Gareth, standing by and hearing, claims this quest according to promise, calling himself the king's "kitchen-knave, and mighty through his meats and drinks."

He gets the boon he craves, and is appointed to the quest, but the maidens astonished and disgusted that a scullion should be given her to do a knight's work.

> "Wherefore did the king
> Scorn me, for, were Sir Lancelot lackt, at least
> He might have yielded to me one of those,
> Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,
> Rather than—O sweet heaven—O fie upon him—
> His kitchen-knave.
>
> To whom Sir Gareth drew,
> (And there were none but few goodlier than he)
> Shining in arms, 'Damsel, the quest is mine,
> Lead, and I follow.'"

So the pair journeyed on,—the lady flying before the knight in disgust while she could, and flouting him in disdainful anger when she was forced to endure his company, until, after some adventures by the way, they came to the place of first trial, where the first "lawless warrior," who called himself Morning Star, paced before "a silk pavilion gay with gold," paced on the further side of a bridge which spanned the full and narrow stream. Gareth fights and overcomes this warrior, and he and the damsel go on to meet the second, and soon come upon him.

> "So when they touched the second river-loop,
> Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail
> Burnished to blinding, shone the Noon-Day Sun,
> Beyond a raging shallow."

Him Gareth also overcame, for after they had met midstream, and had struck four strokes,

> "as the Sun
> Heaved up a murderous arm to strike the fifth,
> The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream
> Descended, and the Sun was washed away."

Then they went on to the third trial. It soon came,—

> " For there, beyond a bridge of triple bow,
> All in a rose-red from the west, and all
> Naked it seemed, and glowing in the broad
> Deep-dimpled current underneath, the knight
> That named himself the Star of Evening, stood.

The third combat is the fiercest. The knight's armour of hardened skin turned Gareth's sword,

> " till at length Sir Gareth's brand
> Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the hilt."

The combatants closed in fearful wrestle; but at length Gareth, straining to his uttermost,

> " Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er the bridge
> Down to the river, sink or swim."

Then came the last trial, the most terrible of all. For just before the castle of Lady Lyonors was set

> " A huge pavilion like a mountain peak,
> Black, with black banner, and a long black horn
> Beside it hanging."

From it issued,

> " High on a night-black horse, in night-black arms,
> With white breast-bone and barren ribs of Death,"

a silent monster, said to have the strength of ten men. With him Gareth closed in battle shock. Death was cast to the ground, and slowly rose.

> " But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the skull.
> Then with a stronger buffet he clove the helm
> As thoroughly as the skull; and out from this
> Issued the bright face of a blooming boy,
> Fresh as a flower new born, and crying, 'Knight
> Slay me not: my three brethren bad me do it,
> They never dream'd the passes could be past.'"

So Gareth won the quest,—

> " And he that told the tale in olden times
> Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
> But he, that told it later, says Lynette."

Such is the story.

I do not think that Mr Tennyson has been so successful in this delineation of the early times of Arthur's reign, as he is in some of the scenes taken from the days of mistrust and gloom that marked its close. The Idyll, of course, suffers from being read out of its proper place in the series, for we cannot exclude from our minds the thought of the sin, and sorrow, and failure, which the poet has long since brought before us with such power, and

which, therefore, we must always feel overshadowing the fairest and brightest days of the Round Table. But, even allowing for this, I still think that in this Idyll we miss "the wild freshness of morning,"—the free, spontaneous spring and play of thought, and aspiration, and action; the unlimited hopefulness and sense of life that belongs to the fresh early growth of a man or of a nation. There is something of it in the incidents of the poem, which are probably due to the old chronicles,—there is a boyish energy and fulness of life, a love of rough jokes and fanciful extravagances, which, however, do not find themselves easily expressed in Mr Tennyson's refined and thoughtful, but rather monotonous style; and the result is an artificiality in the tone of this Idyll. which is hardly to be found in any of the others.

This artificiality extends to the allegorical side of the poem. All the Idylls are more or less allegorical, for as we see plainly in that one,—*The Holy Grail* —which is especially full of strange mystic symbolism and significance, the whole story of Arthur and his followers has for the poet a deeply allegorical meaning. But this Idyll alone, instead of having the mystical meaning woven in with its story by subtle touches, so as to reveal itself only to those who look for it, gives us an undisguised parable,—a very beautiful parable, it is true, but less beautiful, less poetical, and less impressive, from its very plainness and deliberateness. The parable of "The war of time against the soul of man" has been presented to us by Mr Tennyson in nobler form and with fuller meaning, in the story of his great hero himself, whose morning victories were easily won; whose noon-day strife was hot and hard; the struggles of his life's evening sore, perilous, and well-nigh overwhelming; whose glorious day sank at last in seemingly fatal and disastrous defeat, which was really but the entrance "into an isle of rest, whence in higher glory he should return again."

We may infer from the hint at the close, that the love—story which runs through the Idyll is the poet's own conception, by introducing which he adds a new beauty to the old story of adventure and success; bringing out in his way of treating it the modern thoughts about love, as a gradual drawing together and union of minds and hearts, in the place of the simpler and more outward notion of the old chronicle, in which bravery and prowess

are rewarded by the winning of a rich and beautiful bride. This love-story is the best thing in the poem. To it belongs the lovely song, so often quoted that it is needless to repeat it again, beginning—

"O morning star, that shinest in the blue,"

richly musical in itself, but gaining great additional beauty from its setting, making, as the successive verses are sung by Lynette, an unconscious chorus to the story of the change of her feeling for Gareth—the vanishing of contempt, the slow uprising of love.

The characters of Gareth and Lynette are not unlike those of Pelleas and Ettarre; the same characters, one might say, fallen on good days instead of on evil—formed when all around served to train them to truth and nobleness, instead of to debase and degrade them. Gareth has, like Pelleas when he first comes before us, an implicit trust in man's honour and woman's truth, and a perfect devotion to the lady whom he serves, in spite of difficulty and scorn, which yet does not descend into that servile submissiveness which lowers the character of Pelleas; for Gareth, when most scorned and flouted, keeps the same perfect knightly courtesy, neither resenting Lynette's contempt, nor yet so submitting to it as to lose his own self-respect.

In Lynette we see a frank child-like consciousness of her own charms, which, in her happier story, is never soured into the heartless vanity of Etarre; an impatience, a readiness to despise at the first glance without looking below the surface, a carelessness of another's feelings, which, in a maiden growing up in an evil time, when all the air was filled with subtle poison, and faith and truth were almost unknown, and the highest and noblest outward seeming concealed or were believed to conceal the basest crimes, might have hardened into scornful pride and cruelty, and ended by blighting all better things and changing the whole character into one of treacherous wickedness, but which, in Lynette, living in an atmosphere of generous thought and noble endeavour, knowing of evil only in the form of open violence, were changed by the true courtesy and nobility of her knight into frank admiration for his greatness, then into reverence and true-hearted love.

The melody of the poem all clings about its love-story, for the versification is, on the whole, less flowing and sweet than Mr Tennyson's usually is, and there are

some lines, especially near the beginning, of quite unmanageable awkwardness; but, as the poem goes on, and relates the adventures of the knight and the maiden, it grows sweeter and more musical, and there are some passages that have all the old beauty of sound answering to sense which we have learned to expect in Mr Tennyson's verse.

On the whole, however, I cannot think that this last poem will add greatly to the Laureate's fame, though when set in its proper place in his Arthurian epic, it may have its part in bringing out the story and the meaning of the whole.

The other Idyll in the volume, *The Last Tournament*, is a much more powerful and sustained effort, more worthy of Mr Tennyson's genius. It belongs, like Pelleas and Ettarre, to the last part of the Arthurian epic, but it is not, like that poem, simply repulsive and horrible. The story of Tristram, Isolt, and Mark, is a sort of shadow of the story of Lancelot, Guinevere, and Arthur, repeated in far lower natures, and unredeemed by any touch of penitence or self-devotion, and it stands as a sort of typical instance of the way in which the queen's great sin spread a poison around which was eating out the heart of the nation. But it is only, after all, an episode in the poem, the main interest of which lies not at Tintagil, but at Camelot, not in the guilty love of Tristram and Isolt, but in the whole picture of the beginning of the end. The vague mistrust that haunts the king—he dreams not yet of the worst, but he cannot but observe

> "The foot that loiters, bidden go,—the glance
> That only seems half-loyal to command;"

and he questions whether it may be that the realm which he has upreared, is falling "back into the beast, to be no more;" then all these vague suspicions, and others more dreadful still, spoken out to the king, in coarse foul words, by the robber chief, whom he, still constant to his vows and his duty, goes forth to punish and destroy; the last tournament itself, where Lancelot sits as umpire, weary and sad, where the laws of chivalry are broken, where many knights turn cravenly from the contest, and Lancelot gives the prize with listless scorn to one who fought for it for the sake of a guilty love, and all feel that the old faith and the old courtesy are gone, and "the

glory of the Round Table" is no more; these, joined with countless smaller delicate touches, combine to make up the dark picture of shame, disappointment, and failure. Nature herself feels the gloom, and instead of the bright spring morning on which Gareth entered Camelot, we have the stormy autumn afternoon, whose rain drenches the white robes half-unwillingly worn in honour of the Dead Innocence.

This poem, with its one idea, so firmly held and so powerfully worked out, forms a fitting prelude to the two last and greatest of the Idylls, which tell of the repentance of the guilty Queen, and the "passing of Arthur" into the mysterious unknown land from whence he came.

GRACE.

The Harbour Bar.

HER sails are tattered, her sails are brown,
Tempest driven is she;
She hath wandered up, she hath wandered down,
Tossed on the cruel sea.
Spent she comes to the harbour mouth—
Spent as the swallows are
When they reach the gate of the golden south—
But what of the harbour bar?

Where hast hailed from, thou shattered bark,
Tossed on the cruel sea?
From waters so fierce, from waters so dark,
Methought no darker could be.
But dark is the sea, and dark is the sky,
Where the tempests brooding are,
And never saw I waters so high
As those on the harbour bar.

Whither art bound for, this dreary night,
Out on the cruel sea?
The City of Gold, with its lamps alight,
Is the haven where I would be.
I have fought with the waves, I have fought with the foam,
I have wandered afar, afar;
Oh, God! if I perish so near to home,
Lost at the harbour bar!

Ships are lost at the harbour bar,
Who have weathered the cruel sea;
Ships are lost who have sailed from far,
Storm-tossed and spent like thee.
There is but One who can face the sea
Where those white breakers are;
Hast a pilot on board with thee,
Can weather the harbour bar?

Her sails are tattered, her sails are brown,
A tempest-tossed bark is she,
But the lamps are lit in the Golden Town,
And the winds are hushed on the sea.
The storms that stayed her, the adverse tides,
They all forgotten are;
Into the harbour safe she rides,
Over the harbour bar. R.

Milla Forres.

A TALE OF FORTY-FIVE.

"Altius ibunt qui ad summa nitunter."

CHAPTER I.

MILLA FORRES AND ITS INHABITANTS.

THE sun was setting over the Aberdeenshire hills on a glorious evening in autumn, throwing long shadows up the glens, and deepening the purple on the heather. The air was very still, so still that the long boughs of the birch trees scarcely stirred as they drooped over the little mountain burn that brawled down the glen.

On a mossy granite boulder, which some ancient hurricane had hurled down from the mountain above, and deposited at the burn's edge, and over which now grew a gigantic birch tree, a young girl was sitting, lazily dangling the broad straw hat, which she had removed for the sake of the sweet evening air, by its strings over the burn. Judging by her appearance, the girl might have numbered about nineteen summers. She was slight and very fair, with masses of clustering chesnut hair, and a pair of

bright laughing eyes that matched her hair in colour. The open sleeves of her simple white dress showed her rounded young arms, and opening in front, gave a glimpse of a snow-white throat and neck, where the Forbes tartan plaid, in which she had muffled herself, had fallen apart.

She is evidently waiting for some one, for at every sound she looks up quickly, and strains her eyes to catch a glimpse of the high road, which runs along the foot of the glen. By and by unmistakeably wheels are heard. Immediately she mounts the granite boulder where she has been sitting, and begins waving her handkerchief towards the carriage, which is seen rapidly approaching down the road. The signal is answered from the carriage. Bounding from the rock with the spring of a wild deer, she hastens down the glen, and through a little wicket gate, which leads to the back entrance of an old-fashioned Highland country house, buried amongst hills and trees. She arrives, breathless, at the front door just as the carriage enters the avenue, and stands waiting on the door step, with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, till it drives up to the door, when she springs on the carriage step, and half devours its inmate with kisses before she has time to alight. Oscar, the big Newfoundland watch-dog, seems to share in her joy, for before the new arrival has got up the door steps, his big paws are on her shoulders, and his tongue is in alarming proximity to her face, for which unseemly demonstrations he meets with only the laughing reproof,—"Down, down, Oscar. Poor old fellow, are you glad to see me home again?" to which he replies by vigorous wags of his huge bushy tail, and renewed gambols of an equally alarming nature. Just inside the door stands the old family *factotum*,—clanswoman, retainer, nurse, housekeeper, general counsellor, all that is implied in the now, alas, almost extinct species of family servant; less servant than humble friend, whose fidelity was perfect in its very humility, whose service was a part of her religion, and who would as soon have dreamt of the possibility of the termination of her duty to the family, as of the possibility of the termination of her duty to her Master in heaven.

"Well, Elspet," said the new comer, taking the old woman kindly by the hand, "how has all been with you since I went away?"

"Deed, Miss Barbara, I'm fain to see ye back again. Milla Forres is no like itsel' when yere back's turned; no

but what Miss Nancy's a braw hoose-keeper, but ye canna pit an auld heed on young shou'ders ye ken."

"Now, Elspet, that's too bad," laughed our young friend of the burn side, "it's not fair to tell tales of me to Barbara that way, when she's just arrived too; and I'm sure I came down to that horrid old kitchen of yours every day nearly, and told you when to kill the white cock, and what to do with the turkey's eggs, and this is all the reward I get!"

"Ou aye, Miss Nancy, saving and excepting the day Maister Macdonald cam', an' ye went out wi' him to fish i' the Eagig, an' there was naething i' the hocs, or i' the farm yard either, but the singed sheep's heed that was ower frae the day afore, an' the braw English leddy frae the castle comin' to her denner; and the day the pedlar gaed by, and ye couft twa new breast knots, an' ye had nae money to pay for the peats; and the day—"

"Hush, hush, Elspet," said the girl, laughing, and holding her hand before the old woman's mouth, "you mustn't tell Barbara *all* my delinquencies; besides, ye're forgetting the bonny new mutch I bought, besides the breast knots, with the money for the peats."

"Na, I'se no forgetting, Miss Nancy, it'll be lang or I forget it," said the old woman, looking fondly at her nurseling, "an' as I was saying, its ill pitting an auld heed on young shou'ders."

"Come Elspet," said the new comer, "you're giving *me* credit for a very remote antiquity."

"Na na, Miss Barbara, ye're young eneuch i' years, I ken, but there are folks that are born wi' heeds that dinna need gray hairs to steady them, an' ye're yin o' that sort, I'se warrant."

The new comer smiled kindly on the old woman as she passed into the old-fashioned hall, where the family generally sat. The traveller was also a young girl, perhaps two years older than her sister, but differing much from her in appearance,—tall and nobly formed, with a sort of unconscious stateliness in her walk, and an equally unconscious pride in the poise of her well-formed head; she was fairer, too, than her sister, with great, deep blue, dreamy eyes, and brown hair with a thread of gold in it, and a broad, white, placid brow. The blue eyes were looking very kindly just now down on the bright little sylph that clung to her as a climbing rose might to the oak that supported it. She took the smiling little face between her

hands, and looking tenderly down into the bright eyes she said,—

"Well, Elfie (for Nancy rarely got her own name in the family, she was one of those people whom one instinctively calls by some pet name), you have great news to tell me." A bright blush and a quick laugh was the only answer. "Well well, kitten, we'll talk about it when we go to our own room to-night," said the elder sister; then putting her arm round her young sister's waist, Barbara drew her to her, and, kissing the frank, young brow, said gently, "God bless you, my darling, and have you in His good keeping, wherever your lot may be!"

It is always best to get over dry details as quickly as may be, and so we shall conclude this chapter with a brief *resumé* of the history, position, and prospects of our two young heroines at the time when our story begins.

Barbara and Nancy Forbes were the only children of the old baronial house of Milla Forres. Their mother had died when her eldest little daughter had seen only six summers, and the little Nancy was a prattling baby of four, and dying, she had told the elder girl that she must be a mother to the motherless little one. The injunction made a deep impression on the sensitive, thoughtful child, and all through their solitary childhood in the great, rambling, lonely house, she had watched over her little sister with all a mother's care, and much of a mother's wisdom. The relationship between them had always, from the very first, been that of the oak and the clinging plant, and as they grew on to womanhood, the tie that bound them to each other had grown and strengthened. Their father,—a silent, somewhat austere man, much engaged in the political struggles of the time,—had never been much to either of his daughters; and in the solitude of their mountain home, the two girls had grown more and more all in all to each other. For almost the first time in their lives, they had parted a few months before, when the elder sister had accompanied her father on a visit to some friends in Edinburgh. During their absence, a visitor had come to Carrick Castle, the nearest country-seat to Milla Forres, who, in his rambles, had encountered our little fairy of the burn side, had persuaded his cousin, Lady Macdonald, to ask her to stay a little while at the Castle during the absence of her father and sister, and had ended by inducing her to promise to become his wife. Neither Colonel Forbes nor Barbara had as yet seen young

Macdonald, but he was the eldest son of one of the principal Jacobite families in Perthshire, and that was quite sufficent to satisfy the old Colonel. Barbara was not so easily satisfied however; and she hastened back to Milla Forres as quickly as the tardy coaches of these days rendered possible, to see, with her own eyes, after the well-being of her young sister, leaving her father still in Edinburgh deep in political intrigues. And here our story begins.

CHAPTER II.

THE SHADOW.

MILLA FORRES was looking its loveliest the morning after Barbara Forbes' arrival, as the two sisters set out for their accustomed stroll before their early breakfast. It was that glorious autumn weather—of all weathers the most delightful in Scotland—when all nature seems to rejoice with a deeper joy, even than the green gladness of early spring. The heather was sparkling thick with dew-drops, the water of the little burn laughed and glittered and danced in the bright sunshine, the great purple mountains stood out in hazy grandeur in the clear, sharp air, and the hundred tints of the birch trees had all a streak of gold. The two girls wandered up the glen drinking in the keen, pure morning air, and rejoicing in the universal gladness.

"After all," said Barbara, at last, "there's nae place like hame," Nancy; I wouldn't give these dear old heather hills for all the grandeur I saw in the south."

"What! not for Edinburgh, that you raved so about in your letters?" said her sister.

"No, not even for Edinburgh; Edinburgh is very beautiful, but, do you know Nancy, I never felt at home there, except when I got away out of sight of the houses, half-way up Arthur's Seat, where I could see nothing but the hills and the sky, and those grand old Salisbury Crags, and even then it wanted the bonny Eachig, and and the birks, and the heather,"

"Why, I thought you would have looked down on Milla Forres for ever after seeing Edinburgh; I think I should," said the younger sister.

"Look down on Milla Forres!" said Barbara, "I should as soon think of looking down on you, Elfie."

"Well, I was'nt quite sure but you might do that too," said the younger girl laughing, "after seeing all the grand folks."

The elder sister merely laughed incredulously, and drew closer the little hand that rested on her arm. They walked on in silence for a little while, and then Barbara felt her sister suddenly start, and a bright blush came to her fresh, young cheek.

"Why there's Alaster," she exclaimed. "What could have possessed him to get up so early this morning; he's lazy enough generally, I'm sure."

Barbara looked up and saw a tall, young Highlander, in a Macdonald tartan kilt and plaid, striding rapidly down the glen towards them. She turned and looked smilingly and lovingly on the bright, blushing, young face by her side, and thought she had not far to go to seek for the reason of Alaster Macdonald's early rising. As the young man approached, he lifted his bonnet with Highland courtesy as he said, in a bantering tone,—"The top of the morning to you young ladies, you're early astir."

"The top of the morning to you, sir," said Nancy, saucily, "pray what's become of your contempt for larks and dew-drops this morning?"

"I'm afraid I didn't come to pay homage to the larks and dew-drops Elfie," he said; then added, "Will you not introduce me to my future sister, Nancy?"

"I don't see that you need much introduction, you seem very much inclined to introduce yourself," said the girl, laughing and blushing, "but as Barbara has just come from the air of a city, I suppose it should be done with all the honours. Mr Alaster Macdonald, of Castle Ronald, allow me to present you to Miss Barbara Forbes, of Milla Forres."

"Well, now," said Barbara, "that ceremony being satisfactorily performed, I hope, Nancy, you will allow us to leave the air of the city, and return to that of the mountains, which, by the way, has given me a keen appetite. Mr Macdonald will you come home with us to breakfast?"

"I did not mean to encroach on your hospitality thus early, Miss Forbes," said the young man half bashfully, "and yet, if you will allow me, I do not know how to refuse myself the pleasure," and he looked admiringly at the bright face and sylph-like form by his side. So the three turned down the glen towards the old mansion-house, chatting and laughing merrily. Their clear young

voices rang out through the fresh morning air, and the old hills smiled down upon them as they passed under their sombre shadow, and the burnie sang at their feet, and the lark over their heads, and there was not a cloud in all the sunny sky. Ah! how often, in after days, when the clouds had gathered, did the thoughts, of two at least of their number, return with a strange lingering regret to the brightness of that first autumn morning.

Long before they reached the front door of the old hall, Barbara had made up her mind to approve of her sister's choice, and the half-jealous feeling, of which, even while she was ashamed of it, she could not fairly rid herself, at the thought of any rival in the young heart, which till now had been exclusively her own, had faded away. The gentle chivalrous courtesy of Alaster Macdonald's manner was specially grateful to her proud, sensitive, impressionable nature, quick to feel mental atmospheres in others, and peculiarly alive to the charm of knightly difference. There was a kind light, too, which shone every now and then in the young man's dark brown eyes, which seemed to her to promise well for her darling's happiness. It was a merry little company, therefore, that sat round the breakfast table in the old hall that morning, devouring home-made cakes and scones, and Highland butter, with the appetite of youth and happiness, and making the thick old walls ring with their joyous badinage. Barbara watched her sister closely, and saw that she was happy,—happy, as through all their happy childhood she had never seen her before, and with one half-stifled sigh that this feeling, so new and strange, should thus outweigh all that a life-long affection could do, she smothered the last spark of jealousy in her generous, loving heart, and resolved that from henceforth she would be content that her darling should be happy, even though she could have so small a share in making her so.

When breakfast was over, leaving the lovers together, Barbara went down stairs to give the household orders to old Elspet. It was the first time she had seen the old woman alone since her return, and sitting down on the broad window ledge, in the old-fashioned kitchen, she began a confidential talk with that faithful old family friend.

"Come, Elspet, I want you to tell me all you think about these doings of Miss Nancy's while we were away, she's quite stolen a march on us all," she said, smiling. To her astonish-

ment the old woman did not return her smile, nor answer immediately, but bent her head lower over the dish of beans she was shelling. "What's the matter Elspit," she continued, still smiling, "do you not like the braw wooer upstairs?" Still the old woman did not answer, but as she raised her head Barbara saw tears trembling in her eyes. The smile left her face, and she asked anxiously "What can be the matter Elspit? You must tell me. Is there anything wrong?" The old woman's fingers trembled visibly as she went on shelling her beans, and slow tears began to roll down her withered cheek as she answered slowly—

"Na, na, Miss Barbara, there's nocht wrang as I kens o', an' he's a braw callant, an' a bonny, an' I ken ye'se say it's nocht but an auld wife's havers, but oh! my bonny Miss Nancy, the bairn that I nursed i' my bosom," and the old woman's voice was choked in sobs.

"Elspit, dear Elspit, what is it?" said Barbara, now thoroughly alarmed, kneeling down beside her old nurse, and taking her hand in hers.

"Nocht but an auld wife's havers, as I pray the Lord on my bended knees ilk nicht, Miss Barbara, an' aiblins I'se wrang to frichten ye wi' them, my hinny, but they *did* say as ower folks hae the second sicht, an' my grandmither saw the battle o' Killiecrankie sax months afore it was focht."

"But what has the battle of Killiecrankie to do with Nancy and Alaster Macdonald?"

"Aiblins naethin, my dear, but I saw a sicht."

"What was it you saw, Elspit, tell me quick?" said Barbara.

"Aweel then, gin ye *maun* ken, Miss Barbara, it was the very first nicht they were plighted tae ilk ither, an' I had heard naethin o't, for Miss Nancy was at Carrick Castle, an' I hadna' seen Maister Macdonald ava; I was lying awake i' the gloamin, and a' o' a suddent I saw Miss Nancy an' Maister Macdonald (only I didna' ken wha he was at the time), and yersel, Miss Barbara, standin' a' thegither i' the glen i' the bricht sunlicht o' just sic a mornin' as this. I saw ye a' just as plain as I see ye now, an' I saw the draps o' dew on the heather, and the muckle hills, and I heard the Eachig wambling ower the stanes, just as if I were outside the door this minute, and ye were a' three standing lauchin' i' the sunlicht," the old woman paused, and Barbara said cheerily—

"Well, Elspit, there's nothing very horrible in that, is there?"

"Na, na, gin that were the end o't; weel, as I said, ye were a' three standin lauchin' i' the sunlicht, but by and by ye're shadow, Miss Barbara, began to grow langer and langer, an' I wondered, for it seemed to be the mornin' still, an' as it grew langer an' langer it grew darker an' darker, an' it fell ower the ither twa, I couldna' see ye're face, but I saw the faces o' the ithers as the shadow grew darker ower them; Maister Macdonald's face grew like death, an great draps o' sweet stood on his broo, but Miss Nancy didna' seem to see the shadow, an' she went into it an' was swallowed up in it smilin' an' lauchin,' just as afore. Then *her* shadow began to grow langer an' langer, an' I saw you an' Maister Macdonald standin' in it, an' baith ye're faces were as white as death, but they were quite quiet an' calm like, an' had a sort o' shine on them, like what the Bible says o' the Martyr Stephen, when they were stonin' him, an' then they a' faded i' the dark again."

Barbara's face was very pale, and her hand trembled a little as she rose from her knees, and putting her arms round the old woman she kissed her tenderly.

"You silly old Elspit, to frighten your dear old heart with a dream like that. I'm sure you had eaten some crab for supper before you went to bed; confess now, you dear silly old thing," she said laughingly, but the old woman only shook her head sadly as she muttered,—"Guid grant it be nae, but they *did* say ower folks hae the second sicht."

JEANIE MORISON.

(*To be continued.*)

The Ilse.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE.

I.

I AM the Princess Ilse,
And dwell in Ilsenstein;
Come with me to my castle,
Great joy shall there be thine.

II.

With my clear waves I'll sprinkle
And cool thy aching brow;
Thou shalt forget thy sorrow,
Poor wretch, so care-sick now!

III.

In my white arms I'll rock thee,
To my white breast thee hold;
There shalt thou lie a-dreaming,
Of the fabled joys of old.

IV.

I'll kiss and I'll caress thee,
As I was wont to do,
To the dear Kaiser Heinrich,
Now lost to mortal view.

V.

The dead are dead for ever,
But all things do not die;
And I am fair and blooming,
My laughing heart beats high.

VI.

Come down into my castle,
My castle of crystal bright;
There mingleth the shout of the vassal,
With the dance of lady and knight.

VII.

There rustle the silken garments,
Mid the clang of spur-clad feet;
The dwarfs blow horn and trumpet,
And the clashing drums they beat.

VIII.

Yet my arm shall twine around thee,
As round Heinrich it twined of old,
When I closed his ear, that he heard not,
Though the horns blew loud and bold.

MEGKAIG BHEAG.

Beatrice.

Perocchè spesso ricorda Beatrice,
Sicch' io lo intendo ben, donne mie care.
Vita Nuova.

It is now almost six hundred years ago, that is in the year 1275, that a May-day festival was held at the house of Folco Portinari, a rich and noble citizen of Florence. This festival in honour of spring, was of some importance, and was later celebrated in the public gardens of the city on Ascension Day; but at the time of which we speak, was held by the leading citizens at their own houses. And to this feast came a young man called Aldighiero Aldighieri, bringing with him his little boy of nine years old, Durante or Dante Aldighieri, and there the boy beheld among the other children, Beatrice, or Bice as she was commonly called, the daughter of his host, a little maiden not much over eight. That meeting was fraught with great consequences to the world at large, as well as to the children. Let us pause for a moment to glance at their circumstances and surroundings.

The time was the very zenith of the middle ages, just when all remains of the ancient civilisation had vanished, and before the dawn of those scientific discoveries which have moulded modern life. St Louis had not long ceased to reign in France, Edward First had just begun to reign in England—great men both, who held in with a firm hand the barons who lorded it over kings and people throughout most of Europe. Italy, at the height of its influence and power, was involved in perpetual struggles with the German emperors, while the Italian cities, guarding their liberties from all outer central powers, though rent by factions within, were yet strong from the very fire and devotedness of their political loves and hates. Mind clashed with mind, as sword with sword; the public was so small that any citizen might hope to make his mark upon it. There were already great architects in Florence,—several of the buildings we now admire there, belong to this period, and are scarcely modernised; there were poets and painters; the arts had begun to flourish; and in the comforts and splendours of life, Italy had already attained a point that England had hardly reached two centuries later. But in all countries, let it be remembered, this seems to have been a period of exquisite

taste. The dress both of men and women has never been more graceful and beautiful; church architecture had reached perfection—the loveliest and purest specimens of Gothic date from this century, and the architecture of dwelling-houses was also appropriate and grand, if not luxurious. Some of these characteristics of the time and place throw much light on our subject. We find an intense feeling for beauty, also a political fervour, induced by ardent patriotism, acting upon a small number, when friends and foes were near acquaintances. Further, we see the sort of narrowness of conception brought about by the scientific ignorance, which viewed the fragment of our globe then known, as the centre of all creation—sun and stars as its satellites, space and time as filled with it and its history. Perhaps the intellect worked the deeper for being less diffused; the human mind and its relations to its Creator were profoundly searched and studied, and philosophy and theology were open as pursuits to all persons of education. And, amid such surroundings appeared Dante, to leave us in his poem the very essence of the middle ages condensed, as it were, into one splendid crystal,—the deep if sometimes pedantic, philosophy, the narrow cruelty, the intense patriotism, the fervent religion, and lastly, our special subject, the profound veneration for the feminine ideal—Beatrice.

"She was," says Boccacio, "about eight years old when they first met, very charming and pretty in her childish way, with a gravity of speech and manner not expected of her tender age; and she was, besides her beauty, so full of goodness and sweetness, that she was considered by many as a little angel; and Dante, child as he was, received her image with so much passion into his heart, that from that day forward she never, while he lived, departed from it." For the history of this love we must turn to Dante's own autobiography—La Vita Nuova—which consists of a series of poems written at different times, connected and explained by a prose narrative, written when he was about the age of twenty-seven.

Before going further, we must mention some opinions of commentators on the inner meaning of Dante's works. We constantly find in them a mystic symbolism underlying the narrative; and he himself informs us, in one of his letters, that his great poem means—*first*, just what it says on the surface,—that is, so far as his genius could show the realities of the world of spirits; then, *secondly*, a

parable of the life of man, and how he rises from evil through purification to goodness. From this point of view, Virgil would represent human, and Beatrice divine illumination. Further political and moral significations are interwoven, making Dante, as Miss Rosetti justly remarks, a very difficult study, "Not because he is obscure, but because he is prismatic." He flashes out several different ideas at once, and there always seems something new to discover in his writings But some commentators, disdaining the key Dante himself has given, have gone so far as to assert the whole "Vita Nuova" to be a political allegory, of which the "Divina Commedia" is a continuation, in which Beatrice stands for Germanic supremacy in Italy; and all the cotemporary poems of his friends (for they also would need explaining away, as they allude to various facts connected with Beatrice) to be, not what they appear, but a kind of Argot or Jargon, in which the ladies praised by name stand for various political entities. This reading was first, we believe, invented by an exiled Italian, and certainly seems like the dream of a political exile, morbidly brooding over his own and his country's misfortunes. It is vigorously, and, we think, entirely refuted by the best Italian commentators; and though we follow them in believing that more meanings than one may be traced in the "Vita Nuova," we also take their view that there can be no greater mistake than to suppose the actual narrative to be primarily or chiefly allegorical. The people lived, the events happened, and Dante strove to soothe the ache of his life, by finding a mystical as well as an external explanation for them. And who shall say that he did not seize some deep truth; for the eternal meanings of apparently trivial events may be there for those to find, who most see through the accidents and shadows to the essentials of existence. We need not here dwell on those inner meanings, except to protest against their interfering with the truthfulness of the simple natural story which is our present subject. Dante, the fiery man of action of middle life, the stern embittered exile of later years, was evidently in his early days a man of the warmest and keenest affections.

Amor e cor gentil son una cosa—

he sings, and, indeed, it seems as if love was the mainspring of his life,—love of woman, love of his country, or rather liberty, and love of art. Beatrice, his lady, married; and his

love seems to have been only the purer and the less selfish; she died, and he seems to have suffered an agony of loss, while her memory continued to be all that was left for his best affections to dwell upon. His patriotism, after being thoroughly called into action, seems to have been blighted by gross ingratitude in the rulers of the native city once so dear to him: love of abstract justice remained, but that for his country was turned to gall. The love of his art,—spontaneous and unconscious at first,—grew and deepened, and while his broken hopes lived again in a new form as religion, his poetry too, culminated in the intensest yearning for perfection,—the furthest flight towards ideal glory ever achieved outside of special revelation, in the mysterious music of the *Paradiso*. A devoted lover and an ardent patriot, whose private and public life were alike unfortunate,—a man of most sensitive pride, forced to feel his dependence on coarsely patronising nobles, it is difficult to conceive any one more full of splendid vitality, of power, and brilliant genius, whose happiness was more completely wrecked, to whom life less fulfilled its promises. But we owe to these disappointments the *Divina Commedia*. Without them, could it ever have been written, could it ever have plunged so deep and soared so high, to live as a record of human trust in ultimate justice, mercy, and happiness,—to serve, as it has done, for a foundation of all that is highest in modern poetry? Dante has gone into the very depths of evil,—he has proclaimed it with no faltering voice as utterly hideous and hateful, and in its nature perishing; and he has come out from it with the announcement, that in spite of it, all is well. Like some great cathedral, not without its gloomy crypts, its grotesque mouldings, but ever tending in intense aspiration heavenwards, whose every stone is placed with consummate art and with unerring instinct of proportion, stands the poem that embodies so much of the thought of humanity. Part, no doubt, shows the distinctive ideas of the middle ages, and is chiefly of historical value; but most belongs to all time, and to all men and women, as much as to his first readers in mediæval Italy. What, then, was the influence that first and last chiefly swayed this extraordinary man? We may answer, Beatrice; and it is on Dante in his relation to Beatrice that we wish in these papers to dwell,—Dante as a gentleman in Florence six hundred years ago, passionate and gifted, fond of music, painting, and literature, and a master in poetry.

"In that part of the book of my memory, before the which is little that can be read, there is a rubric, saying, *Incipit Vita Nuova.*" Thus Dante begins his autobiography, and goes on to describe the first interview of the two children. Beatrice was dressed that day in "that most noble colour, a subdued and goodly crimson, girdled and adorned in such sort as best suited her very tender age." From that time love governed his soul, often commanding him to seek "this youngest of the angels; wherefore I, in my boyhood, often went in search of her, and found her so noble and praiseworthy, that she seemed, as says Homer,—'not a daughter of mortal man, but of God.'" Probably the children, when quite young, met often, and delighted in each other's company. We know their houses were only fifty paces apart; but it is in the nature of things that they should have been more separated afterwards. At any rate, a second epoch or beginning of his love seems to be fixed by Dante in a recorded interview, nine years later, in the street, when she walked clad all in white, between two elder gentlewomen, a young maiden in her first bloom of beauty, and saluted him so graciously, that the sweetness of it overwhelmed him. To use his own graceful expression,—"La sua ineffabile cortesia, la qual è oggi meritata nel grande secolo," haunted him afterwards in the loneliness of his own room, and overtaken by a pleasant slumber, he saw her in a vision borne in the arms of Love, from whom she accepted Dante's heart "as fearing," and then Love went up with her to heaven, and anguish broke the dream. And Dante writes thereon his first sonnet, in which occurs the line,—

> "Allegro mi sembrava amor, tenendo
> Mio core in mano,"—

and from this time records that love had complete mastery over him. A period of genuine youthful passion seems to follow. Beatrice is in church, he gazes upon her with such absorption that it attracts the attention of the bystanders, some of whom whisper that another lady, then seated in a direct line between him and Beatrice, has brought him to this pass. Not wishing his secret to be made manifest, he encourages the mistake, and using this lady as a "screen," writes many things in her honour, but with covert allusions to the real lady, who, it appears, had the clue to the mystery. And it is certainly to be hoped that the lady who served for years as a screen was equally well informed. On her departure from Florence,

Dante feels himself obliged to adopt another "screen," which we may easily imagine to have been a very delicate matter, and which this time seems to have been less successfully carried out. It looks as if he had been too ardent, or the "screen" not discreet enough; at any rate, the matter was spoken of by many in terms scarcely courteous, he tells us—whereby he had many troublesome hours; and worst of all, Beatrice, believing evil rumours, denied him "her sweet salutation, in which alone was his beatitude." For this salutation not only was wont to make him overflow with happiness, but also filled him with such warmth of charity, that he would then have pardoned whoever had done him an injury; and we suspect in Dante's case, its power over him could have been described in no higher terms. He says that after sobbing himself to sleep like a chidden child, love again appeared to him in a vision, and said, "My son, it is time that we lay aside our dissimulation," exhorting him to throw off disguise, and write a poem openly to Beatrice, but not to send it where it could be heard by her without his aid. "Ma falle adornare di soave armonia, nella quale io sarò tutte le volte che farà mestieri." Love lurked in music then as now.

After the poems were written, some questions occur which much perplex Dante, and with them we think closes one period of this love history. "Is love on the whole a good thing?" he asks. Yes, for it diverts the mind from all mean things. No, for the more faithful the lover the more pangs he suffers. Yes, for the name of love is sweet; and names are the consequents of things, No, for his lady was not "come le altre donne, che leggiermente si mova del suo core." Beatrice was not easily moved, and about this time also an event probably happened which changed their mutual relations.

E. J. O.

(*To be continued.*)

A Review of the Past Year.

"Time rolls his ceaseless course."

As a refluent wave of the great tide of human affairs leaves another year on the shores of the past to add its little shell of eventful circumstance to the mighty rocks of history, we are reminded of the stealthy encroachments of the Great Enemy on the territory of life. So insensibly do the years creep on, that they are but counted as they are gone, and their duration seems even briefer than their retrospect. That which has just gone seems, on a general review, less striking and eventful in character than its immediate precursors; but it is an important link in the historical chain of the ages.

A prominent feature which has imparted a singularly dull aspect to the last twelve months has been a meteorological one. Whether the weather deities have been petulantly disposed towards the new comet, said to have been in their neighbourhood, science does not seem to have as yet determined; but certain it is that Dame Nature has, summer and winter alike, forsworn her time-honoured smiling aspect, and appeared a very impersonation of "Niobe all tears." Even the kindly interposition of the usually capricious St Swithin failed to effect a revolution in favour of sunshine.

A winter of high markets is the natural sequel to a rainy summer, and the expense and scarcity of necessary articles of food and fuel reduce housekeeping to considerable straits. The trial is, however, modified to the toiling population by an almost unparalleled degree of commercial prosperity, which has raised the rate of bank interest to an abnormal figure in check of the inevitable speculative mania which must follow *par conséquence*. The startling price of potatoes, bread, and coal is counterbalanced by a value set upon labour which makes the working-man relatively richer than his employer, who has to pursue his vocation for the public benefit under intimidation of absolute compliance with the demands of his employés, thus occupying a most critical position of twofold trial. The unnatural antagonism of class against class involved in the system of strikes, so profusely illustrated during the past year, is recognisable as the fruits

of radical politics, which have probably developed on a larger scale than many of their propagators anticipated, so that we would fain hope much severer lessons are not yet needed to teach our people that, as anarchy is the perfection of tyranny, so republicanism is the most aggravated form of despotism.

A wholesome antidote to the poison of false feeling diffused through the national system was administered by the illness of the heir-apparent, and its noble sympathetic results, in an expression of loyal feeling unprecedented in the annals even of loyal Britain. Not less touching than the world's eager anxiety on behalf of the safety of this one young life, or even the universal attitude of supplication for its preservation, was the noble demonstration of glad gratitude that acknowledged the deliverance. It was something to find the diverse, many-minded multitude of mankind of one heart after all; for humanity is the glory, as it should be, the characteristic of the race; and no nobler triumph of its expression could have been wished than on that day of national thanksgiving, when our dear Queen went through the streets of her metropolis, with no other guard of honour than her faithful people, to return public thanks to God for her son's recovery. The same electric thrill passed through the nation's heart, when our sovereign addressed those two beautiful letters to her people, which, in their earnest simplicity and heartfelt truth, proved her right to that position in the affections of her subjects, which is greater elevation than a throne. If the nation remain but true to the harmonies of the chord which vibrated throughout the length and breadth of the land, there is a glorious future in store for the good old British constitution, such as will complete the discomfiture of all revolutionists, republicans, and anarchists, Bradlaughs, Odgers, and Sir Charles Dilkes.

Britain's devotion to her commercial interests, to the prejudice of ancient honour and prestige, has become too notable for denial; but the undue presumption upon the resultant principle of "peace at any price," evinced in the grossly exhorbitant Indirect Alabama Claims of America awoke a patriotic chord, not dead, though seldom stirred, which compelled a slightly less one-sided exercise of Geneva arbitration. As regards domestic legislation, it seems a consideration seldom taken into account by our senators, that much good might be done for the country, by regulating the carrying into effect of old laws, instead

of making innumerable new ones. Now that the Ballot Bill has at last passed, its troubles do not yet seem at an end, and it remains to be seen what is to be the result of the introduction of the favourite element of electioneering excitement into the administration of education under the new Act for Scotland, remembering that the very element of religious instruction to be so regulated, has not only been the *sine qua non* of all parochial teaching, but the acknowledged strength and backbone of the system since its foundation by John Knox.

The happy prevalence of peace has not been without acknowledgment on the part of the foreign powers. Of the festive demonstrations, commemorative no less of the Kaiser's late warlike triumphs than of his present peaceful dispositions, the most strikingly important was the friendly reunion at Berlin of the Emperors of Germany, Russia, and Austria, as the representatives of the three great European powers, to the complete ignoring of the ancient head of the council which generously affords to be merely amused at the slight. The omnipotent genius of the empire has shown itself equal to much in the accomplished expulsion of the Jesuits from Germany, and the promised overthrow of the gaming tables—systems which eat as a canker into the heart of national prosperity. France and Spain are still too like volcanoes, from which an eruption any day need not surprise us. It seems a particularly hard fate for the poor young King Amadeus, who made the effort to confer on an oppressed people the benefit of order and wise government, that the result should be so disheartening; but those who best know Spain are not without hope for her when she shall have recovered from the effects of centuries of darkness and oppression. France still struggles with the lesson which she has been taught without ceasing, but never learnt, viz.,—that she is incapable of self-government. The inconstancy of her temper, and the instability of her institutions, just now illustrated in a wish to revert to a style of government, from one form of which there was but lately such a violent recoil, leads us to anticipate a future that will be but a repetition of the past, full of the same mistakes and suffering, the same penalties,—unless hope should again arise in the presence of a wise restraint, the most beneficent agency for the regulation of lawless impulses.

India has cost us dear in many ways, but in none more

so than in the lives of great men, which have fallen a sacrifice to British interest in her welfare. Yet more tragic in effect than the malign influence of climate, was the dirk of the assassin, which deprived England of a great statesman, and India of a valuable viceroy, to whose distinguished abilities and amiable virtues, both parties in the state united to do honour. Lord Mayo thus leaves no unworthy precedent for Lord Northbrook, and all succeeding viceroys, to follow, though his reign was brief as it was brilliant.

The grim King, in reaping his usual harvest, has cut down one of the mighty (so far, at least, also, a victim to interest in the welfare of our Indian empire), in Dr Norman Macleod, a name that has been for years proudly cherished throughout broad Scotland, and many lands besides. By his loss, the world is robbed of one of its most beneficent benefactors, its most active regenerators, and most gifted sons. He was a lover of the race; and the warm and intense humanity of his sympathies operating upon the singular vitality of his genius, constituted the great secret of his world wide influence. Dr Macleod was one in whom this principle of healthful and vigorous vitality was developed, morally, mentally, and physically, in such an exceptional degree as to stamp all his different efforts in life with an originality which commanded attention and respect. In the church, society, literature, and the pulpit, he was an acknowledged power for good; and his genial temper and humorous disposition, as well as his earnest enthusiastic spirit, were recognised as the natural exponents of the well rounded character of a Christian minister. Although not scatheless in the arena of ecclesiastical politics, nor free from the foibles incident to a generous nature, Dr Macleod's character, as a whole, formed an equally happy and powerful testimony in favour of Christianity, confirming a remark once made in reference of his powers as a preacher, viz., "That man would *compel* his hearers to be Christians." As a preacher, indeed, he has stood alone among many distinguished compeers. The fervid eloquence which adorned his sermons, being merely the charmed channel through which an appeal to the heart of his hearers flowed direct from that pure spring in his own, which welled upward from the Fountain of Truth. Above all, we recognise in him a man of great constraining power, not so much because of his commanding intellect, or large heart, as from the grand

principle of faith, which was the root of his whole character, the secret of his strong courage, and the watch-word of his active life. In him we see such a family resemblance to the heroes of faith, as reminds us especially of Martin Luther. Long may it be ere the memory or teaching of such a Scotch Martin Luther lose their impression on the hearts of his countrymen. Peace be to his memory!

The Episcopal Church in Scotland has also this year lost two of her brightest ornaments, having, in the early part of the year, been called on to mourn the death of the venerable Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr Terrot, and still more lately, one who has gained the affectionate admiration of men of all sects and parties, by the catholic spirit, the geniality and generous sympathies which were his distinguishing characteristics. In Dean Ramsay, not only his own church but all Scotland has lost a man to whom all looked as the embodiment of many of the brightest features of the national character.

Looking beyond our own border we find that the English Church has lost, in Professor Maurice, one of her greatest religious teachers. A man whose influence has extended far beyond his own personal sphere.

Of a different stamp was the brilliant and sparkling genius of the lively Irishman, whose death deprives us of the clever political commentaries of Cornelius O'Dowd, which so long imparted flavour to Blackwood's staunch conservatism, as well as any further recital of the dashing adventures of the race of Charlie O'Malleys and Harry Lorrequers. The pen of Charles Lever has ministered too long and too pleasantly to hours of ennui and langour for us merely to feign regret that it is now laid aside for ever; but our consolation must be that its creations are immortal, and that Mickey Free will be as fresh and delightful to generations to come as to that in which he was made known to the world.

In the retirement of Italy, where this gifted son of Erin passed the last years of his life, has also passed away a well-known artist, whose name, early connected with painting, has latterly been associated with the progress of photography, which his genius was the means of developing under "skiey influences" peculiarly favourable to satisfactory results. Robert MacPherson, as, in great measure, the engineer of his own fortunes, supplies an example of the successful growth of Scotch artistic genius on Romish soil.

Yet another fair flower of our own nurture has been plucked in this garden of Italy. Mrs Mary Somerville's life furnishes a triumphant vindication of the capacity of the feminine mind for scientific achievement, and her death closes a career of industry in which time-honoured womanly employments were not ignored in the presence of learned avocations. Neither did the distinguished lady's strength of understanding and power of genius obscure the womanly elegance of her mind and amiability of disposition, so that her life and character must be considered remarkable.

Our obituary closes with the name of a lady who, like Mrs Somerville, has lived to a good age as the ornament of a distinguished circle of English society, and the wife of one of the greatest statesmen of the age. So much has been said of the virtues and graces of Lady Beaconsfield that it is unnecessary further to magnify them here, unless it be to say that the womanly devotion with which she repaid the chivalrous worship of her husband (too rare a thing now-a-days in such perfect development) seems to us the brightest ornament of her character.

Edinburgh has lately had the honour of welcoming quite a galaxy of distinguised visitors. A special interest attached to the visit of the Ex-Empress of the French, not only from the magnitude of that royal lady's misfortunes, but from the resolute magnaminity with which she has supported them. Of other foreign royalties, including the Queen of Holland, and a Prince and Princess of the triumphant house of Hohenzollern, the Burmese and Japanese Embassies were specially honoured as the intelligent bearers back to the east of a message of western civilization. A visit so prized as Her Majesty's first stay in our capital since her widowhood, was necessarily made the occasion of signal ebullitions of royalty, the credit of which, however, can hardly be claimed by the citizens as occurring at a date when the inhabitants are generally out of town, and our city is taken possession of by admiring tourists. The warmth of the reception afforded to the Prince and Princess of Wales, evinced such a continuance of the feeling so spontaneously expressed during the dark days of last December, as rendered it matter of some disappointment, that the privacy of the royal visit was so strictly preserved as to avoid all demonstrations of loyalty.

A traveller whose approach had been so well heralded by the trumpet of fame as Mr Stanley, had his welcome insured, but its chief warmth was the undoubted tribute not to reputation, but to the intrepid and adventurous achievement of a task that had in vain puzzled the learned and attracted the brave.

Last, and certainly least of this group of celebrities, came the Tichborne claimant, whose efforts to elicit a Scotch demonstration of sympathy met with signal failure. Apart from its general interest of character and circumstance, the Tichborne case presented an instance of a trial protracted to a length of which the legal annals of this country offered no previous example.

Amongst the publications of the past year we may mention, among scientific works, Dr Bastian's work on the *Beginnings of Life*, and Mr Darwin's on *Expression*; in theology, as the most generally interesting, Dr Stanley's *Lectures on the Scottish Church*, with the reply to it put forth by Dr Rainy; in poetry, a new work by Mr Browning, and another by the Laureate; among books of travel, the most remarkable is Mr Stanley's account of his exciting adventures in search of Dr Livingstone; while in fiction, we may observe, in a prominent position, Mr Black's *Strange Adventures of a Phaeton*, though the chief place must be given to George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, which has run its course throughout the year.

We may fitly conclude this paper with a New Year's motto, in the words of the last-mentioned distinguished author—

> "Our deeds still travel with us from afar,
> And what we have been makes us what we are."

ELFIE.

Burns and Byron.

COMPARISONS are proverbially odious, but they are occasionally useful, and especially natural in the survey of human character. In our private circles, we are every day comparing the kinds of excellence and the degrees of beauty we meet in society; and names that are before the world, blazoned with the rare hues of distinction, become blended in our speech and thoughts, the one with the other. The unfairness of the process is constantly declaimed against, but it is not the less indulged in, and such names as Shakespeare and Milton, or Thackeray and Dickens continue to supply duet harmonies to the trumpet of fame. Such are not without their use and value, when, instead of weakening and depreciating by invidious and unjust comparison, they rather strengthen and individualize the points compared, by the power of contrast. It is the influence of this idea that has attracted us to institute a side-by-side comparison of the synthetical and antithetical characteristics of two great poets, George Gordon, Lord Byron, and Robert Burns.

Their names at once suggest a startling contrast. The one, born in the purple of aristocracy, the other, wearing the hodden grey of the peasant, they existed in a social antipodes to each other as distinct as wealth and liberal education can be separated from grinding poverty, and narrow opportunities of gaining knowledge. But, on the enchanted ground of genius' domain, they meet as equals, shadowed with the same magic mantle, crowned with the same laurel wreath, dowered with the same magnificent gifts,

> "The vision and the faculty divine,"
>
> "To witch the world with noble minstrelsy."

For, if ever it was true that the endowments of a poet are

> "The hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
> The love of love,"

it was true of those two poets, Burns and Byron. Theirs was the brotherhood of transcendent genius that could conquer men's hearts by its awing, thrilling, softening power; and theirs, alas! too, the kindred fate of crushing sorrow and bitter disappointment. Their lives were frail and mortal, as their poetry is immortal and imperishable; standing in history's graveyard as broken columns,

with defaced fronts more touching in their story than the most elaborate inscription. Yet, though both are tragedies of strangely concurring briefness and heart-rending pathos, the story of Robert Burns is (as well remarked in the February number of *Blackwood*) less tragically terrible than that of him who was of the world accounted a more fortunate man.

As with the lives, so with the poetry, which must, to a certain degree, be the expression of a man's inner life; and as the life of Burns was less jangled and out of tune with the ruling order of destiny, so his poetic inspiration was sweeter, nobler, truer to the harmonies of the human heart. So far poetry was identified with both lives, that its mode of expression accords with the leading tone of each mind; in the one, characterised by intensity, in the other, by individuality; and hence an instance of the influence of character, in its operation on genius. As Alexander Smith says of Burns:—

"Of all the great men of the north country, his was incomparably the fullest soul. What fun he had, what melancholy, what pity, what anger, what passion, what homely sagacity, what sensitiveness. Of everything he was brimful and overflowing."

On the other hand, the outlet of Byron's capacity is narrowed by an individuality that limits its grandest poetic outbursts to a selfish reference. His was a selfish nature, so in his poetry we find him ever analysing self, thinking of self, reverting from all other subjects of contemplation to self, nay, the principle of self-devotion was the power that stimulated his genius into activity. Burns' earlier poems are full of youthful grace, freshness, and fervour; Byron's were at once branded as weakling productions, as characterized by artificial sentimentality and morbid bathos, fitly enough named "Hours of Idleness." Such as they were, their reception stung their sensitive author into different exertion. His genius woke not till his selfish pride was touched, and then arose, a giant, to scourge all meaner mortals into admiring wonder. Burns needed no such flagellating influence to quicken the exercise of his inspiration. His muse was no Nemesis, whipping him into Pegasean harness by a sense of wrong, but Coila, blushing sweet in modest worth, the impersonated genius of his own loved land:—

"He seized his country's lyre
With ardent grasp and strong,
And made his soul of fire
Dissolve itself in song."

This was surely the fulfilment of a nobler mission than bewitching the world with the song of his own woes, like him whose grand powers made even that small theme seem great:—

> "Black clouds his forehead bound,
> And at his feet were flowers,
> Mirth, Madness, Magic found
> In him their keenest powers."

Burns' was the better use of a great gift, and in this, (though both were so magnificently dowered that the one cannot be beggared at the others' expense), the poorer man was the richer, and more truly enriched the world.

We would remind those intellectualists who award to Byron the choicest niche in the temple of poetic fame as a Master Expresser, that felicity of expression does not fulfil the whole mission of poetry, whose aspects are at least threefold, exercising the powers of Creation, Imitation, and Expression. The Creative power, which christens the poet himself, revels in the realm of Imagination,

> "And gives to airy nothing,
> A local habitation and a name;"

the Imitative faculty, as the poet's art exercised in the drama, is most nobly illustrated in the case of

> "The man whom nature's self had made
> Herself to mock, and Truth to imitate;"

and Expression, even on the authority of its greatest supporter, is merely the "dress of thought," and in its use, the poet becomes the interpreter of nature, animate and inanimate, to the less perceptive world. Thus "finely touched," the poet's spirit is not finely touched "*but to fine issues*," the thrifty goddess determines the glory of her creditor according to his improvement of the lent scruples of her excellence, and his greatness becomes involved in the use he makes of his gifts, as well as the possession of the gifts themselves. In this application of poetic talent, we cannot doubt that Burns was decidedly superior to Byron, if the benefit of humanity is to be considered as the aim of true poetry. His was no selfish song, but a flood of pure, natural, poetic impulse, that refreshed and strengthened the world, encircling with the rainbow halo of imagination the humblest scenes of everyday life, and evolving the poetry inherent in all surrounding nature.

Byron otherwise exercises his power to throw the glamour of poetic light over the monotonous self-torturings of a *blasé*, misanthropic spirit. His grandest

descriptions of nature are permeated with an unwholesome melancholy which we now know by his life to have been in great measure affected. Its eccentricity, nevertheless, attracted the world, and his greatest work derived much of its first popularity from the vague, mysterious figure, whose shadowy presence is felt throughout, lending a crowning interest to every scene described. The same personage appears in different forms and situations in all his other narrative poems. In them, Byron did one great thing,—he consummated the revival in the history of poetry, inaugurated by Sir Walter Scott, and stamped the age with a poetic vitality different to the weakling life of the preceding century. Not that he did so from choice, as he boldly avowed his preference for the twittering strains of the Little Nightingale of Twickenham to the immortal music of the Swan of Avon; but, as has been well remarked, his genius was equal to any application. Disdaining not to stoop to the public taste, and ready to curry favour in the surest way, he could sing as well in a style that would please as not, and devoted his gifts to a popular use. So following in the wake of the great Scottish Minstrel, who had led the way with his border tales, he too struck the chord of narrative in song, and at once transferred the interest of the world-wide audience to eastern story. How immeasurably inferior, those representations of Turkish life are to the inimitably painted border scenes of our great Sir Walter, is at once evident, equally evident as is the fact of their poetic excellence. Poetic beauty they have in a rare degree, but dramatic excellence none, for Lord Byron lacked the power of creating and sustaining character. His stories sink into nothing beside his fits of poetic musing, and, according to Lord Macaulay's discrimination of his *dramatis personæ*, they maintain no individuality, develope no unmistakeable or subtle characteristics, and neither act nor speak in character.

As a mark of Burns' greatness in this respect, we have only to refer to his inimitable dramatic fragment, Tam o' Shanter, one of the greatest triumphs of direct inspiration that can be noted in poetic record. The work of one day, (according to a brother poet, "The best day's work done in Scotland since Bruce fought Bannockburn)," it illustrates more strongly, perhaps, than anything Burns ever wrote, the vivid facility of his genius, which could

impart to the creatures of his imagination an imperishable individual existence, by wielding the instrument of language with Shakespearean strength and skill. Those who are bound in the thraldom of the narrow conventionality of the day, do suffer from queasiness because of the absence of modern English refinement in the fresh, vigorous Scotch; but even so are some people blinded to the beam of Shakespeare's greatness, in searching out the mote of his occasional derelictions in word morality. Happily, such small exceptions can no more affect the immortal greatness of our Scottish than of our English Shakespeare; the imperishable enunciations of each will live as long as the languages in which they are written; and Hamlet and Tam o' Shanter's "familiar household words" of wisdom will be embalmed with classic honours in the mind and memory of society, reading or non-reading.

With all his remarkable power of language, wealth of words, and masterly expression, the vein of Byron's poetry is not rich as Burns' in pithy, terse expressions of homely wisdom, keen observation, gentle philosophy, or fervid sentiment. The reason may be found in the supremacy of Burns as a lyric poet, which involves singular happiness of expression. As a song-writer, he has been equalled by very few poets in the world, and certainly surpassed by none. He touches the chords of joy and woe with the hand of a master; and humour, pathos, love, friendship, patriotism, independence are wrung out with alternate force and tenderness, kindling the imagination and rousing the heart. In these immortal effusions, Burns uses poetry as the key to the human heart, a sanctum of which Byron has not the *entrée*; and, so long as poetry is a thing of the heart, intellectual genius must bow to that which sways the soul of man with the resistless potency of a governing motive power. If we but reflect for a moment on the manner in which our two poets treated the standard subjects of lyric inspiration, we must become convinced of the superior greatness of him who sang as he felt with his warm heart, over that of his mighty successor, whose poetic vision was that of the gigantic intellect.

First, there is love, the theme of all poetry since the world began. Both poets were therein much exercised and not always happily so. Both were crossed in the purest affection cherished by either, for the "Mary" who was in each case, the pure impersonation of his womanly ideal. How

much of the impression was due to the very effect of the romance of disappointment on poetic minds, we need not stay to enquire. They both loved and sorrowed, but how differently! To the one, this disappointment became a hardening, embittering influence, darkening a whole life with its malignant shadow of self-constituted misery; to the other, a "lingering star, whose less'ning ray" shed a pure, benign radiance upon the path of every-day life and common duty. No woman who values her sex can fail to recognize in the love which reigned in Burns' life, and breathes in his poetry, a sincere devotion to, and faith in woman, which neither the life nor the writings of Byron acknowledges. Byron's amatory effusions are all descriptive of his own feelings, *his* love, *his* disappointment, *his* suffering, and on too many occasions does he scoff at the very idea of faith or constancy in the womankind he professes to adore. "Believe a woman or an epitaph!" he exclaims, for in his estimation, she is a very weathercock of impulse:—

"Pique her and soothe in turn, soon passion crowns thy hopes."

It is pleasing from such declarations to turn to Burns' love-songs, and there find everything most excellent in nature brought into requisition to illustrate the beauties and graces of the fair half of creation; as for instance, in that most exquisite of love-songs, "My Love is like the red, red rose," or the little less beautiful "O' a' the airts the win' can blaw," and "O wert thou in the cauld blast," not forgetting the touching commemoration of the enduring truth of such love in "John Anderson, my jo, John."

The ruling key-note of all Burns' songs is intense, unquenchable patriotism, a passion nowhere acknowledged by Byron, who, on the contrary, expressed the utmost loathing of his native country, in which he had seen some sorrows certainly, but which had the claim of native land upon his heart. Lord Byron's cosmopolitanism springs from the same root of enlarged selfishness, as the present cry for the extinction of patriotism in favour of universal brotherhood. We have only to glance at history to see how contemptible is the career of a nation devoid of nationality, which is no more a bond restraining universal love and freedom, than family ties are gyves preventing the development of individual character. Happily, Scotland has ever been a patriotic country, and her patriotism has won her chief glories in history and song; but the world at large, though aware of the history of the past, had not the

fact of a grand living national character brought within its knowledge till Burns stirred the theme, and made "Auld Coila's hills and dales" resound with the "native wood-notes wild." Thus, it is not necessary to conjure up that trumpet-sound to martial fame on a battle-field, "Scots wha hae," to prove Burns' patriotism, but enough to think of the simple, homely Scottish life and character he has painted in all their lights and shades, showing the poetry in a life of duty, however humble, or a home of love, however lowly, till

> "Rustic life and poverty
> Grow beautiful beneath his touch."

One grand, strong feature he ever loves to bring to the front, as it was with him a personal, as well as a national attribute, and that is the honest independence of a Scotchman, however poor. As a telling vindication of the superiority of character, independent of class distinctions, what indeed can equal

> "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man's the gowd for a' that."

This manliness of character is what Byron wanted, as however great a poet, he was a little man, wrapped up in a puny, morbid sensitiveness to the acknowledgment of the importance derived from his rank. And, therefore, although this self-consciousness might add to his fame in one way, by eliciting curiosity, wonder and admiration, it could not win the devotion accorded to Burns, the secret of which was well marked by one of Scotia's hardy sons of toil, who, when asked if he could explain what it is that makes Burns such a favourite with all in Scotland, replied, "It is because he had the heart of a man in him. He was all heart, and all man; and there's nothing at least in a poor man's experience, either bitter or sweet, which can happen to him, but a line of Burns springs into his mouth and gives him courage and comfort if he needs it. It is like a second Bible."

This is after all the grand secret of Burns' power. It is the strong loving sympathizing humanity of his poetry which commends it to all lovers of poetry and of the race; and hence of his fame it has been truly said—

> "First the banks of Doon beheld it,
> Then his own land formed its span,
> Ere the wide world was its empire,
> And its home, the heart of man."

Byron had no sympathy for his kind; but he wins it by the sheer force of his genius. It is the tribute we

must pay, and we pay it, while the poet himself is wrapt in solitary converse with nature, exclaiming,

> "O that the desert were my dwelling-place,
> With one fair spirit for my minister;"

or describing his hero, as becoming, "in man's dwellings,"

> "A thing
> Restless, and worn, and stern, and wearisome,"

What a contrast to such utterances of stern misanthropy is the picture drawn by Professor Dugald Stewart of the peasant-poet gazing, in his company, on the beautiful landscape viewed from the hills of Braid, and acknowledging that, of all that varied scene, he derived the greatest pleasure from the sight of the smoking cottages, knowing the worth and happiness they contained. This is, indeed, the man who could write the "Cottar's Saturday Night," the poet whose descriptions of the scenic beauties of his native land are all interwoven with some episode in the life of its people. "The Banks o' Doon," "The Brigs o' Ayr," "The Birks o' Aberfeldy" are beautiful to him, but chiefly interesting as the scenes of human life and passion. The objects of nature do not shut out, but suggest and confirm his human interests. In a love-song he sings,—

> There's not a bonnie flower that springs
> By fountain, shaw, or green,
> Nor yet a bonnie bird that sings,
> But minds me o' my Jean."

His sympathies extend to the animal creation. In a storm, hearing the "winnocks rattle," he "thinks him o' the ourie cattle," he has a lament for his pet lamb, Mailie, a "guid New Year" for the farmer's auld mare, Maggie, an indignant word for the "barbarous art" that wounds a hare, a kindly feeling even for the mouse, and the most poetic expression of sympathy for the crushed daisy,—

> "Wee modest crimson-tipped flower."

Can there be any doubt of the strength of genius' wing that occasionally stoops in its soaring flight, any prejudice in favour of a great poet necessarily choosing only great subjects? Let Wordsworth's gentle rebuke be the answer:—

> "When Poesy steals along or stops,
> Watching the least small bird that round her hops,
> Or creeping worm with sensitive respect.
> Her functions are they, therefore, less divine,
> Her thoughts less deep, or void of grave intent
> Her simplest fancies? Should that fear be thine,
> Aspiring votary, ere thy hand present
> One offering, kneel before her modest shrine,
> With brow in penitential sorrow bent."

ELFIE.

Something about Everything.

(CONCLUSION.)

NOTHING is so truly a man's property as that which he knows: not his wealth, for it is liable to unforeseen changes, and is at best but one of the modes by which he may express noble ideas, not in itself conducive to their conception; not his family, for even his children have their own individuality of character, diverse from his, and, except in earliest years, uncontrollable by him; not his social position, for its value depends on the current opinions of the day. These are all possessions that can be touched by his fellow-men, but his knowledge is exclusively his own, not to be taken from him save by the power that alone commands his intellect, and to whom injustice is impossible. And yet, few are able to distinguish between the gold and the dross, the knowledge that ennobles and the knowledge that degrades, and fewer still can perceive what frame of mind is fitting for him who would acquire the former. He to whom such perception is possible knows that he must sit, an humble pupil, at the feet of the great teachers of men. To him, all that is beautiful and wonderful comes as food to the hungry; from among various opinions he culls those which his mind is most calculated to receive, assimilating them, so that the tone of his daily thought shall be the richer for each volume that he peruses. He truly becomes a "knowing man," or *king*, ruling self, the most difficult of subjects, till, by virtue of that sovereignty, he attains, without seeking it, some deserved influence and dominion over his fellow-men, meriting the encomium of the poet on the "equal mind;"

> "Who reigns within himself and rules
> Passions, desires, and fears, is more than king."

Now there are certain qualities needful for the acquirement of wisdom, and the due appreciation of its value; notably reverence, calmness, and patience. To these three it may be thought that enthusiasm should be added; but though in its way it does much, though when the fire of it is subdued so as to be of a constant heat, not fitful nor quickly burned out, it is a powerful assistant to the student, it is yet of less force than the calmness and patience of determination. Enthusiasm may enable a

man to leap at a truth as if by inspiration, but it misses the full satisfaction that crowns the labour of the investigator who has slowly trodden every step of the way. The necessity of a habit of reverence is more and more thrust upon us as we observe the baneful results where it is lacking; and we might almost add, where, in this complaisant age of ours, is it not lacking?

In conversation, in action, in literature, we find the same taint showing itself, the same covert sneer at what may be termed the æsthetic side of life, the same refusal to give credit to ideas removed from the ordinary run of common-place. Side by side with this defect we observe, as usually happens, its opposite extreme obtaining, in the form of a credulity to which nothing comes amiss, while between these two are endless shades of a dogmatic self-conceit that appears to be in part the outcome of the time, in part cultivated and cherished with a curious complacency, as though to speak contemptuously of a thing were to prove its non-existence. It follows then that to few, as has been already said, is the true spirit of study comprehensible, or the thorough appreciation of the beautiful, whether in the arts or in nature, possible.

In support of this assertion we would ask, how many average men, not specially gifted with a turn for literature, have ever looked into the stores of older volumes in their own language, not to speak of the great schools of other countries; nay, how many have read one tithe of the better works of our own time? A book that requires serious attention does not commend itself to those who must have their learning made easy, after the fashion of modern teaching; who will not condescend to a nut, but must have the kernel extracted for them and sugared withal. We once chanced to hear such a reader reviling the Laureate for his incomprehensibility; and venturing to enquire if the poem under discussion had been studied, were met with the reply, "No, I have not patience to read poetry that must be studied." This, then, is what we have come to; this is the *vox populi* for you, men of genius who have chanced upon these latter days; you shall not utter the God-given thought that is in you, as it is born in your brain; it will be (being of somewhat lofty extraction) too difficult, too intense perhaps, for the reader; you must soften the colouring and make it plain to the most careless eyes, for there will be no patronage for you if your meaning is not lowered to the level of the

most untalented in the impatient crowd that has no reverence for your power.

It is a curious result of this hurried and carping way of reading, that the mind becomes in time absolutely incapable of perceiving what is in reality plain enough. Thus, to take Tennyson again as an example, we have more than once heard men, not unused to books, profess themselves unable to understand the expression "want-begotten rest;" yet, taken with the context, nothing could be plainer. The poet does not envy the caged linnet that never knew the woods, nor the beast rejoicing in the lower liberty in which conscience is unknown, nor yet the unloving heart that thinks itself happy in escaping the anxieties of love, "nor any want-begotten rest." Does it seem possible that explanation should be needed here, that to make them understood, these few lucid words should be lengthily rendered as the rest or false contentment that proceeds from mere lack of knowledge? Perhaps the much vaunted practical mind would better comprehend that to some, ignorance is not bliss.

The popularity of sensational writing is another proof of the habitually low level of taste among us; these books, which run through numerous editions, and are read by thousands, are as a rule not only destitute of any claim to admiration, but are positively pernicious. There is in them no attempt at evolving any principle, no thought of making noble and ignoble things appear in their true light; they are, on the contrary, reversed, for the hero or heroine is often of the ignoble sort, and depicted as the more interesting for that reason. The ancient stage villain is nearly akin to the gentleman of the modern novel; he is of two kinds, tawny and leonine, or black-haired and fiendish, the latter being frequently preferred. Even in describing physical beauty the lowest standard is adopted; we hear little of expression, but we have "thin flanks" and "knotted muscles," which make the reader involuntarily think that he is either in a stable or the Ring, while the hero is further endowed with a sensuous mouth and "thunderous eyes," whatever those may be. Indeed, in one famous novel, these organs so gleam and glare about the pages that we can but marvel that the heroine should love them. Here, again, is the lowest view taken, we presume by choice, of the truth that strength is attractive to a woman; that it is so, is a natural law, but to a woman of even ordinary refinement

this brutal sort of might is by no means pleasing; and Whyte Melville has touched a finer chord when he shows us the utter loathing and repulsion that succeed, in the proud heart of Valeria, to her brief fancy for the daring Gladiator. Yet worse are the heroines dear to sensationalists, for rarely do we find in them anything that is "pure womanly." As girls, they have a passion for one of the dark heroes already married; as wives, they have curious and often singularly stupid secrets from their husbands; while there runs through the whole plot a dallying with evil worthy of French writers alone. Altogether we can but trust that the novel of to-day no longer fulfils its supposed intention, the truthful representation of our ordinary domestic life. The language in which these volumes are written is as chaotic as the ideas that it seeks to express; when the authors wish to delineate a dress or a room, we have description run mad, and we may remark that a catalogue of upholstery or millinery comes more readily from their pens than a picture of natural loveliness; they are familiar rather with Birmingham ware than with starlighted heavens or running brooks. To these, then, or to their readers is any true knowledge possible? We answer sadly, No. It were too far to seek for the primary causes of so great deterioration; but we would fain hope that a reaction is speedily to set in, and that the higher modes of teaching now beginning to spread may aid in bringing about a happy change.

Meantime, cannot those among us, who know the lasting pleasure of well chosen books, do somewhat towards cultivating a better taste? Can we not persuade any that the lily is more beautiful than the nightshade, and that in deliberately choosing the poison they are fatally injuring the mind that is their highest possession? After a revel, a simple repast is unwelcome; but could the revellers be persuaded to turn aside and leave the feast untasted, they would find it speedily cease to tempt them, and if a child were allowed from the first free access to thoroughly noble works, there would be for him at a later period no charm in these inferior volumes. Men seem to forget that literature, like other arts or sciences, requires heedful cultivation, and we may as well expect a mind crammed with sensationalism to be able for any branch of study, as hope to make a musician by the playing of polkas, or a painter by the copying of signboards. And it is not as though the

better food were hard to find,—is there not corn in Egypt and to spare? Not everyone can hear Beethoven well rendered, or have a Vandyk at hand to copy, but to very few are books quite inaccessible. Again we repeat, it is for the young we plead; the eager, thirsty brain panting for new draughts, the fallow field, with the early sun upon it, ready to make the sown seed spring into rapid growth, the tares, alas, with a ranker, quicker verdure than the wheat. We do not commend the narrow care that thinks to exclude wrong by limiting the conception of right; it is worse than futile to suppose that mental starvation can result in aught but subsequent rapacity, when the guiding reins are of necessity removed; nor do we for a moment suppose that good can be attained by the presentation of overdrawn pictures of the punishment of vice. For example, the perusal of a prize tale, in which a whole family perishes from intemperance, will hardly suffice to cure that sin; hysterical shriekings at crime will not abate it. But we hold that a mind trained from childhood to love what is lovely and of good report, taught, both by active teaching and by fitting freedom of choice among varieties of excellence, will turn of its own free will from vitiated and lowering literature to the delight of high ideas and beautiful language. He who has lived in the nursery with Hans Anderson and the Water-babies, who has gone to school with Tom Brown, and sailed Westward Ho with Amyas Leigh, has many more chances in his favour than the boy who rushes straight from the region of superhumanly good children (who always die) to the smuggled novel and modern farce. Or, since space obliges us to speak only of light literature, he who can appreciate Trollope's life-like characters, Charles Kingsley's manly English, Melville's high-bred sentiment, and Eliot's searching chapters, will fling away in disgust the feverish plot that labours slipshod through three volumes; nor are there wanting other authors of whose works it can happily be said that no high-minded girl need fear to open them. One word more we would add in favour of a mine of wealth now too often over-looked; we allude to the Norse and Icelandic literature, which should be specially attractive to us, since in our veins runs some of the gallant Northern blood. Moreover, there is fresh air in their pages, blowing over the life of a free, rough, bold, but essentially noble people, not untouched with sadness, as befits those on whom there rests the "Mountain

Gloom." Very lovely, too, is the modern tale of Arne from the same region, bearing the same impress of freedom, though spoken in a minor key, unlike the great battle songs of the past. Nearly akin to these, and deserving of our hearty love, are our own Highland tales, whose quaint fancies lead us back to the days when we firmly believed in the existence of Jack's Beanstalk. And reaching this ancient article of faith, we are fain to lay down the pen, for our thoughts have but led us back to the simplicity of childhood, and we confess that the child who knows so much less and believes so much more than we, is the innocent and unconscious apostle of that universal gospel of the wise, which says—"The pursuit of knowledge is but a course between two ignorances, as human life is itself only a travelling from grave to grave. In fact, the recognition of human ignorance is not only the one highest, but the one true knowledge, and its first fruit is humility."

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

The Making of the Maker.

THERE is a people, peculiar among men, whose name is as their fellow-men's conception of their essential difference from themselves. FINDERS have they been called, of things hidden from ordinary eyes, as from all else, save Galahad, was concealed The Grail; PROPHETS have they been deemed, inspired, ecstatic, moved by immediate afflatus from the gods, and seeing, with direct intuition, the Future and the Past; MAKERS have they been titled, for they have brought forth things seen from the unseen, and have moulded plastic chaos in their forming hands. What makes them so? Run through all their list of bodily and intellectual powers, and they may seem not richer than many who yet fall short of being what they are. In the study of inorganic chemistry, we discover how very different the compounds may be that result from the same elements in different proportions; nay, even from the same elements in the same proportions. How natural, then, must it be that the slightest variation in the proportions of the same spiritual and organic elements should give results most widely different?

Who can weigh out the last scruple of the excellences required in such grand combinations? Only a surer *Finder*, a more all-seeing *Prophet*, a more skilful *Maker* than themselves,—even the original and all-originating Poet, the Great First Universal Cause.

After His week of working days, wherein He wrote the Poem, whose simplest words we yet have scarcely learned to spell, He entered on this seventh days Sabbath of His rest, which lasteth still. In it He *makes* no new things, but combines, and lets the secondary causes that He once hath stirred work out His will, controlling their mediate power unto His final end. If, then, He will a Poet as a witness of His nature, or interpreter of His works, what has He need of?

I. The Spirit. In all considerations regarding humanity, it seems a matter of course to group them into those relating to the soul and those relating to the body. But, shut in as we are with our one known existence, we find it impossible to conceive the one without the other; so that we are impelled to treat the embodied soul as a complex element, resisting analysis, *for us*. And yet we can make a sort of *formal* analysis, by concentrating our attention, for the time being, upon either. In that mysterious compound, the body certainly is not elemental; whether the pure spirit be so or not, we cannot say,—the Almighty has arranged it for us beyond our ken. What evolution from the material has crawled up to this glorious climax? What power of selection and variation originated the species, Spirit? What transmitted influences and hereditary dispositions have space and time merged in this metaphysic essence? No poet believes these new opinions. *He knows* his soul was sent him straight from God; that "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." Of course, he cannot *prove* ultimate truths to unbelievers; he intuitively believes *in* and *by* his soul. This quick soul-sense is God's special gift in the innate, to the born poet; the result of the form in which his mind was cast. It is witnessed by its ever seeking unto Him; it may be blindly, unnaming, unknowing Him; but through its keen perceptions being made aware of the reality that hides in the unseen, and of that all-embracing Soul in things, towards which it yearns.

II. Its circumstances. Let no one undervalue circumstances. Many assert that genius must ever prove itself,

and that, given the soul-power, it will master any circumstances. But they forget that, while some external aid is necessary even for the recognition of the diamond, more is needed to make it shine to its advantage in clear rose facets, while too much of the same treatment would file it out of existence, or leave it in the comparatively valueless form of diamond dust. Even so the soul-power may lie concealed and dormant, or may be crushed beyond its enduring; for only a due proportion of treatment will enrich it to its true nature. This treatment, all things that in any way affect this given soul, we may widely name its "circumstances," and sub-divide them into (1*st*), Its relations with the body. The veil of flesh must be thin, and at least semi-transparent or translucent to it. It must not obstruct or retard the out-going or the in-coming messages. The bodily sense then, like the soul sense, will be keen and quick, or must *have been* so, at some time of life, that the imagination may through it be stored. The experiences of this combined being form its education. All men are educated up to the number of the days of the years of their lives, and by these days. There is, therefore, no question between education and no education, but between the various manners and matters of education. A man is educated by (2*d*), Local circumstances. The course of nature has a peculiar power over all of us. It requires no upholding care at our hands, but is ever ready to display its charms; it asks no flattery, but being beautiful for us, it flatters us; being varied, it refreshes us. Its utter indifference to us and all our concerns, revolving as it does in another circle that never intersects our own, produces a feeling of awe in our admiration and of reverence in our curiosity. The lightnings flash and thunders roll, the rainbow glows, and the shadows flee away, and there seems a new heaven and a new earth, beautiful and sparkling. We have seen, but the things seen reck not of our beholding. I am far from believing that residence in the country is at all necessary to foster a due appreciation of nature. The scene of our work-a-day world is too apt to lose its sanctity and we our interest in, or comprehensions of its charms. More is often learned in one long gaze by those whose unused eyes revel in it, as a Holy-day of bliss, a Sabbath of rest, a feast of communion, *of which* they dream, and *to which* they outreach, until they meet again. There are some who can ever feed the

sacred fire in unwearied worshipping at the shrine itself of nature, but it is rarely so. Absence makes the heart grow fonder. Imagination, like hope, is not of things seen, for if they are seen, why are they yet hoped for. If they are seen and sung, their singer may be a *Finder*, but may fall short of being *Prophet* or *Maker*. Travel to some small degree is necessary to a poet, and he grows richer the more he wanders. Because variety is necessary before there can be any exercise of thought or comparison, before the comparing faculty is ripened, and the judgment purified. The stronger the contrast, the more the imagination is impressed, therefore, men who dwell in cities write most sweetly of the green fields, that a rare holiday has spread out before their feverish eyes; those who dwell in weary trim Dutch flats, most kindled by the gorgeous disarray of wild free hills; or the natives of the lonely mountains by the full, ever-flowing tide of life in London city-streets. And those who never saw a lake—when on some westland crag they, for the first time, see the billows from the Atlantic break and roar, and flash in spray beneath them, may well silence their dearest friends with, —"That is the sea! Look, tremble, and be still!" While artists are most trusted, who make their sketches "on the spot," poets write best away from it. They must have time to calm their heated admiration; their art of perspective is not that of the London Academy; their representation is not of the scene, but of the spirit of the scene; so that which best clings to their memory, and strikes their imagination, is most likely to re-kindle it in a reader's heart; the essence, not the detail. And, therefore, those scenes of youth that fortune has removed for ever, become idealised most in the poet's song. The enchantment and the mist of distance throw a veil of beauty over the most uninteresting of views; if so be, it once had power to make him think it dear.

3d. Social circumstances. The locality in which he is placed affects much the extent of one's society, but not necessarily its value. *That* is a distinct gift of Providence. The real moulding of a man depends on his closer social circumstances, his family-relationships. The imitative disposition of childhood causes the potency of example in that early period of education which is as an external force to the child's will, and often gives it its life-direction. Four walls may contain all things and beings that influence it, and yet who can measure the outspread-

ing results. The tender mother, the sweet sister, the brave, true-hearted brother, the reverence-worthy father, —is not a poet rich in having these, living or dead? And in his riper years, his love extends perhaps, to some one other, the type of all ideal perfections, and beauties; the very supplement and completion of his own unity. If he be disappointed or deceived, the sun is veiled in blackness, and the stars fall from their throne, and truth departs from the earth. No doubt he is very miserable, but it is the outflowing love that poetises men, not the incoming. In losing one, the poet does *not* lose all. He still may keep *himself* enriched, mayhap, by loving; and trusty friends and wise acquaintances, many as his nature or his lot allows. And even casual passers-by may help him. Therefore it is sometimes better that he should be where he may meet many,—that is, in a town. Jean Paul Richter says a poet ought to have himself born in a small city. Not having leisure to discuss the point with The Beloved of the Germaif Fatherland, I would only remark, that the opportunities for finding the greatest varieties are greater in a large town, where one is also removed from much of the narrowness, and pettiness, and gossip of a smaller place. And travelling must also educate through its presenting contrasts; for the minds of men in different climes vary as much as do the contour of their soil. A wider sphere is provided for the poet, if he be born in some good social circle, for thereby he may be said to travel within the circuit of his own city, and gain a similar good. Not to be despised is rank, for all things else being equal, there is a refinement in manner, a tasteful avoidance of the mean or disagreeable in habit, a magnifying of the chivalrous, that must have a reflex action on the poet's mind and song. And though true greatness has no title-deeds, and knows not the name of Caste, yet the rough granite crag on the lone hill-side will be a nobler thing when formed and polished by a master-hand to represent some gifted man.

4th. Monetary circumstances. Almost a part of the preceding is this; for since so many men have a shyness of and shrinking from others whose incomes are much smaller than their own, a man's sphere is narrowed by the measure of his purse. Riches have no effect in making genius, but they have a powerful effect in cultivating it. They alone can provide means of advantageous travelling,

of any very wide liberal education, and of many cultivations so enriching to mental soil. Yet let no one think riches an absolute good, nor poverty an absolute evil. The one may be even more suffocating to his poet-breath than the other. It is apt to provide flattery and self-content; and the sense of responsibility does not always keep pace with the power to fulfil, so that the rich may spend his riches, and learn less richly than the poor, who spent his little well, and profited wisely in his careful choice. More even than others may the poet use the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh, "Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches," lest I in any way forget Thee, O my Maker, and my responsibility to Thee, and to the talents Thou hast lent me!

5th. Book education is properly travel through time. There, by means of arbitrary signs, invented by skilful man, the once-present becomes ever-present; and he may become acquainted with great minds of other periods, and other civilisations. No introduction is required, no aristocratic prejudice debars admittance; a little money and a little time, gives him the franchise he desires. There he finds a whole University of patient instructors, against whose thoughts he toughens his own. There he opens a whole mine of knowledge-wealth, the hopes, the acts, the feelings, the manners, the beliefs of the younger world. The poet should pre-eminently be a Knower; his knowledge is his material, his Chaos, whence he evolves Cosmos. There can be nothing in his Cosmos that was not crude in Chaos; for his mind is only his instrument. He, above all men, should seek the general; should make powerful generalisations from helpless particulars; that at last he may be able to speak to every man in his own tongue, and become a universal affirmative for many yearning tongue-tied dumb.

6th. Life-education. The poet may be ripening by all these preparatory experiences, but he needs a something more, call it sorrow, loss, anxiety, bonds, or what you will, a something that prevents content. Contented beings are satisfied in life, and do not sing it; but contradiction makes them find their voice, as plucking harp-strings wakes their thrilling tones. It is a concentration of the contrast before alluded to, and its educative force. It may take many a form. It may be the first cloud in a lifetime of summer and sunshine; it may be a bitter disappointment in a slow-fostered faith in some one being,

or it may be a life-long struggle against Fate, who ever harshly contradicts his will and wish; or a sudden awakening to the awful solemnity that lies behind the gaudy tinsel trappings of his life. Then begins that reviewing of the past, that comparing of the present, that straining to discern the future, that grasping after the meaning of things, and yearning after their Maker, that we especially note in the brotherhood of poets. That many write poetry without such stirring discord, is no disproof of my words; for many copy the great painters tastefully enough, who never will attain to be masters themselves. Imitative ability is no poet-test. Look at Milton's "But not to me returns day," at Burns' "The rank is but the guinea stamp, the man's the gowd," at Byron's once-disappointed love, and ever-stung vanity, and the thousands who are of his school. Who can discover Shakespeare's stimulating woes? Yet he must have known such before he drew them. Indeed, reading faithful biographies of great men, we are almost tempted to echo the Swiss Pastor in *Les Nouvelles Genevoises*, "I am selfishly content that poets should suffer, for it is the only way to make their songs truly sweet for us." The manner of trouble moulds the form of the poetry. Political disadvantages rouse representations of the woes consequent on the governing policy, or perhaps lashing satires; wrestling with the meaning of the unseen results in speculative and metaphysic questionings. Bodily weakness has a tendency towards subjective themes, which occasionally become little more than versified complaints. Now, though no doubt the law of the Erewhonites for imposing imprisonment with hard labour on the high crime and misdemeanour of ill health, would materially reduce the number and purify the expression of many apparent incurables; yet it might sweep out of literature a large number of thoughts that, having solaced one, may solace another in like case. No disease is so hypochondriacal as love, Yet in it the subjective is pardoned, nay, welcomed, as being the common voice of man, for no one passion has swayed, in like manner, half so many hearts. There is also a high type of poetry, where the Ego is only used as the particular representative of the universal, which is the ripe end of all poetical and philosophic preparations—a subjecto-objective type—that we must not confuse with cruder kinds.

7th. Leisure. The sorrow may be too crushing, the

anxiety too absorbing, to permit expression. The poet must get beyond it a little way, into a breathing space, whence he may review the situation, and may idealise its elements. Other men may, from morning to night, pursue their worldly occupations, under pressure of anxiety and sorrow, and yet fiulfil their calling. But if the poet has, for instance, to strain every nerve to win the meat that perishes, for himself and his own household, to drain his soul-power in the bread and butter sciences, he never will become what he might be, never utter more than flaming words, or, mayhap, fire sparks of song.

8th. A motive, or "efficient cause." Whole myriads of Gray's "mute, inglorious Miltons" may have been; but, being mute, are "inglorious," and no "Miltons." The *ever-becoming* are not till they *be*. The name is only the ratification of the being. The motive springs from some desire. such as, The *desire of sympathy*, not in the meaner sense of the word—akin to pity,—but a search after recognition by kindred souls. Believing in the mighty potency of soul on soul, when he feels his spirit thrilled by the wonders revealed to him, he expresses it, that he may establish himself as a link in the chain of humanity, and so the electric wave pass through him to others. *The desire of fame.* The love of approbation, wakes with the earliest signs of intellect; and, through life, remains as a wholesome extra-moral restraint on the actions of ordinary men. When this becomes purified and intensified by age and judgment, it often developes into the abstract form of desire of fame. Mere personal acquaintance form a sphere too narrow for him; he would be honoured by the distant, both in space and time. It is a passion considered decorous in a poet, "the last infirmity of noble minds," though some may question its grandeur. *The desire of money*, which all men agree to call most contemptible, and to believe most unpoetical, is closely allied to the last, and serves, quite as well as any other, to draw forth a poet's power. And, after all, where is its meanness? The natural inertia of full content might prevent a man from exerting his genius in expression; but the desire of "providing things honest in the sight of all men," originating in love of approbation; or of supporting his own life in obedience to the moral law; or the life of friends in obedience to the law of love written on his heart, may wake him like a giant from his sleep to do a giant's deeds

A desire of calming one's too passionate fervours. A necessity is laid on some to speak, blind, imperious as the inspiration that precedes it, and a part of that inspiration; when the Vates pours forth, hardly responsible, his wonderful revelations. Such were the oracles of old; such even in modern days have been found poets. Seeley said of Goethe, that he wrote down a feeling in order to get rid of it, and in the very writing, it departed, so that what was true when he had written, had ceased to be true when it was read. But Goethe had a calmer and more philosophic nature than most poets, who retain their raptures in a smouldering glow that may be rekindled when fanned by a genial breath.

9th. Practice. We must not forget how practice increases skill. Few poets, or their readers, find their first essay of power equal to their succeeding ones. They may prove the poet, but it is but in a green bud of promise. Time, new learning, and many failures, help him on to glowing flower and seed-bearing fruit. Aristotle's "natural ability," "knowledge," and "practice," may then be held necessary for poet as for orator; and it is only by the concurrence of all these elements, in proportions weighed out in the balances in God's right hand, that we may hope to see a poet made. LUTEA RESEDA.

Beatrice.

PART II.

Ita n'è Beatrice in l'alto cielo,
Nel reame ove gli angeli hanno pace,
E sta con loro; e voi, donne, ha lasciate
Non la ci tolse qualità di gelo
Nè di calor, siccome l'altre face;
Ma solo fu sua gran benignitate.

VITA NUOVA.

AT this time the life of Dante was prosperous. He was an accomplished scholar, already a renowned poet, and a man who had many friends. He shared in the campaign of the Florentines against the Arrezians in the year 1289, and belonged to the band of cavaliers who volunteered for the first assault in the battle of Casentino, not the earliest in which he had fought. Though not a wealthy, he was a distinguished citizen, and might, one would

think, have aspired to the hand of the fairest of Florentine maidens. Was he not considered a sufficiently endowed suitor for the daughter of the rich Folco? Or when he at last resolved to praise her openly, was it too late to move her heart? Was there always only the friendship of early companionship on her side? We can never know; but we do know, that Beatrice married the knight Simone dei Bardi; and we find at this point, in the Vita Nuova, the beginning of a new epoch, in which we believe may be traced all the allusion ever made by Dante to this change in the circumstances of his love. Hitherto, be it observed, the salutation of Beatrice sufficed for his happiness—now a friend thinking to do him a pleasure, conducts him to an assemblage of ladies come together to do honour to a bride, married that day, and about to sit down at table for the first time in her husband's house. In old Florence these particular assemblies were restricted to married women, therefore Beatrice, who was present, was now certainly married, if she were not, as Rosetti and others think, the bride herself. It looks like it, for "I hardly knowing where unto my friend conducted me, but trusting in him (who yet was leading his friend to the last verge of life)," writes Dante, "resolved to stay with him and do honour to these ladies." This time the sight of Beatrice seems to have overcome him with an agony of emotion, he leant on the painting that ran round the walls of the house unable to support himself, and his friend was obliged to lead him away. "And when my perceptions were come back," he says, "I made answer to my friend; 'Of a surety, I have now set my feet on that point of life beyond that which he must not pass who would return.'" Some great self-restraint seems here indicated, and there follows a record of the tears shed in solitude, of the self-questionings why he still sought the companionship of this lady that brought him but grief and scorn, and of the anguish he endured through love. And now his aspect, changed through suffering, made his secret generally known; and he tells of a conversation with a company of ladies, who ask him why he continues to love this lady whose presence causes him such grief, and to what his love aspires. "Ladies," he answers, "the end and aim of my love used to be the salutation of my lady—but now that it has pleased her to deny me that, love has placed my beatitude where my hope will not fail me—in those words that praise my

lady." And now, indeed, the poems become longer, more beautiful, and more peaceful; nay the old happiness in the later ones seems reviving, as if Dante's heart had reconciled itself to be content with the ideal love that was then a recognised form of the sentiment; sometimes alas! disfigured by unbridled passions, but often perfectly pure, and in its unselfish devotion, ennobling beyond all other earthly feelings.

This ideal love of the Trouvères, minstrels and knights, that was common and esteemed in the middle ages, gave the last touch to that elevation and consecration of women for which Christianity had laid the foundation in southern Europe. Always honoured in the north, invested with new dignity in the south, it was now that Poetry, in its first revival, spread its halo round them and crowned them Queens of the Imagination. This sentiment was meant to be, and usually was, most pure and elevated. Exceptions there doubtless were, and as the middle ages were not times when hypocrisy flourished, we have records that do not attempt to disguise great laxity of morals, as well as those which tell of self-sacrificing affection. But many of the ladies, we may well believe, were worthy of the homage paid them. She who is greatly honoured tends to become honourable. We naturally dwell on what the man does, but on what the woman is; and her distinctive attribute of beauty may so shine in her moral nature, that there is nothing so moving to the heart or so inspiring to the imagination as such noble natured women as it is given to most people to meet once or twice in a life-time. They have a charm that no familiarity can dull, and no closer acquaintance can darken.

> "Yea, let me praise my lady whom I love,
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>
> Love's self being love for her must holier prove;
> Ever as she walks she hath a sober grace,
> Making bold men abashed and good men glad,"

sings Dante's predecessor, Guido Guinicelli. But are we not apt to imagine our ideal lady rather in ancient costume, with hawk on hand, and all the *entourage* of chivalry, than in the prosaic dress and circumstances of modern life? Do we not rather lack aspiration, and hardly even aim at the type possible to those who have leisure and culture? Do not our girls, however honest and good, too often allow themselves little social inelegancies, bits of

second-hand slang picked up from school-boy brothers, and unrestrained carelessness of manner that hinder them from being thoroughly ornamental and delightful, and developing into perfect ladies? More serious doubtless is it, to find the semblance without the substance; men have sometimes said that there is no such fair promise so often delusive as the face of a well-brought-up young woman. An innocent expression may belong only to the youthful beauty of the face, when the character is artful and petulant; and a sympathetic manner sometimes comes from a nervous susceptibility that conceals unrestrained selfishness. But the grace and considerate kindliness of a true lady can hardly be assumed and give an assurance of genuine worth.

Dante dwells more on the manners than even on the beauty of Beatrice, especially when he tells how others shared in part his enthusiasm for her. "She came," as he says, "into such favour with all men that when she passed, people ran to behold her, which was a deep joy to me, and when she drew near to any one, so much truth and simpleness entered his heart, that he dared neither lift his eyes nor return her salutation, and to this many that have felt it can bear witness. She went along crowned with humility, and when she had gone by it was said of many, this is not a woman, but one of the beautiful angels of heaven."

She showed herself so gentle and so full of perfection, that she diffused around her a soothing quiet beyond any speech. No woman could envy her, for through her, all women were raised higher. She comes one day before Dante, preceded by his friend Cavalcante's love, the Lady Primavera, and his heart swells with delight, as one who beholds a radiant summer, heralded by a brilliant spring.

On the last day of the year 1289, her father, Folco Portinari, died, and the will still exists, in which he founds a noble hospital for the sick poor, and leaves a bequest to his daughter Beatrice. While the ladies of her acquaintance were passing in and out of her house, on visits of condolence, Dante sat at the door to gather tidings of his beloved mistress, and seemed, these ladies said, as mournful as if with them he had witnessed the grief of Beatrice weeping in her chamber above. Still the Florentine citizens are wont to sit outside their house doors half the warm summer days; but this was in January, and must have marked for all Dante's devotion to his lady.

Next in order comes the record of a dream, told in such beautiful poetry as shows that the author of the *Divina Commedia* was coming to his maturity. Like all his poems, it loses much in translation, but Mr D. G. Rosetti has made the English language do all it can to render it, and from his version* I give some extracts.

Dante had an illness, and lay unable to move, racked with intolerable pain, while a young and gentle lady, a kinswoman, watched over him. Feeling how frail was life, and how "it fails in us after a little while," the thought came, "Yea, to my lady too this death must come." And then he slept—

"And in my brain did cease
Order of thought, and every healthful thing,
Afterwards wandering
Amid a swarm of doubts that came and went,
Some certain women's faces hurried by,
And shriek'd to me, 'Thou too shalt die, shalt die'

Then saw I many broken hinted sights
In the uncertain state I stepp'd into,
Meseem'd to be I know not in what place,
Where ladies through the street, like mournful lights,
Ran with loose hair, and eyes that frighten'd you
By their own terror, and a pale amaze:
The while, little by little, as I thought,
The sun ceased, and the stars began to gather,
And each wept at the other;
And birds dropped in mid flight out of the sky,
And earth shook suddenly
And I was 'ware of one, hoarse and tired out,
Who asked of me, 'Hast thou not heard it said?
Thy lady, she that was so fair, is dead.'

Then lifting up mine eyes, as the tears came,
I saw the Angels, like a rain of manna,
In a long flight flying back heavenward;
Having a little cloud in front of them,
After the which they went and said 'Hosanna!'
And if they had said more, you should have heard.
Then Love spoke thus: 'Now all shall be made clear
Come and behold the lady where she lies.'
These idle phantasies
Then carried me to see my lady dead,
Her ladies put a white veil over her,
And with her was such very humbleness
That she appeared to say, 'I am at peace.'"

He wept in his dream and sobbed, "Oh! Beatrice, peace be with thee," and the lady with him wept too, thinking it was the pain of his infirmity, and other ladies ran and wakened him saying, "Sleep no more, be not disquieted;" and for them he wrote the poem describing it all.

* *Early Italian Poets*, Rosetti.

It was a presentiment of the grief to come. Far off in the centuries as that grief is, it stands recorded in such burning words that, as we read them, the old sorrow moves us yet; so long healed, we may believe, so lost in the joy of the future, so salutary in its influence on the survivor, yet so intensely bitter that it has given words for the saddest moments of human life. The sonnet marking real joy in his ideal love, beginning,—

> Si lungamente m' ha tenuto Amore,
> E costumato alla sua signoria,
> Che si com' egli m' era forte in pria
> Cosi mi sta soave ora nel core,

was never finished. There is an abrupt break, and the words follow,—"Quo modo sedet sola civitis plena populo! facta est quasi vidua domina gentium. I was still occupied with this poem when the Lord God of Justice called my most gracious lady to Himself, that she might be glorious under the banner of the most blessed Queen Mary, whose name was greatly reverenced by the holy Beatrice." After his eyes were wearied with weeping, he wrote what he calls a poor little widowed poem, so beautiful, that it is unfair to give extracts, though one will be found heading the chapter. In another quaint poem, entitled the 9th of June, 1290 (the day Beatrice died), he expresses, with great force, the more weary and irritating aspect of affliction, which is felt at times replacing a tenderer, nobler grief. Sorrow comes, and says she will stay with him, and ushers in sickness and grief for company. "Go forth," he says in vain; she stops arguing; Love now enters all in mourning raiment; Dante, certainly out of temper, demands, "What ails thee trifler?" and he replies, "A grief to be gone through, for our own lady is dying, brother dear." The desire to find no comforter but Death, who makes all sorrow brief, seems to inspire others of Dante's touching poems. In one he says,—

> "Whatever while the thought comes over me
> That I may not again
> Behold that lady whom I mourn for now,
> About my heart my mind brings constantly
> So much of extreme pain
> That I say, soul of mine, why tarriest thou?
> Truly the anguish soul, that we must bow
> Beneath, until we win out of this life
> Gives me full oft a fear that troubleth,
> So that I call on Death,
> Even as on sleep one calleth after strife,

Saying, come unto me ; Life showeth grim
And bare ; and if one dies, I envy him."

But a fuller life, not death, was to be wrought in him through the memory of Beatrice.

E. J. O.

To be Continued.

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well."

SLEEP well, for it is night—
Night over land and seas ;
The moon is sending white
Snow-showers on the trees ;
Sleep, thou art faint with pain ;
Night hath a potent spell
For weary heart and brain,
Sleep well, sleep well.

Sleep well, for it is night
Over the sin-stained land ;
We look in vain for light,
On one or the other hand.
Night is the hour of dread—
The hour and power of hell ;
We weep not when the dead
At night sleep well.

Sleep well, for after night
The morning cometh on,
And visions of delight
Grow real with the dawn.
When we shall wake, or how,
God knows—we cannot tell
Death-crowned is thy brow,
Sleep well, sleep well.

R.

Milla Torres.

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG CHEVALIER.

IN spite of the laughing disbelief with which Barbara professed to treat Elspet's dream or vision, the old woman's forebodings left an uneasy feeling in her mind. She was angry with herself for the folly of letting any such thing disturb her, but, superstitious, at once by virtue of her race, and of her own impressionable temperament, a superstition which had been deepened by many a weird tale which had beguiled her childhood, and by the mountain solitude in which she had been brought up, it was in vain she tried to rid herself of a feeling of some dreadful unknown future, which seemed to hang like a dark cloud

between her and the sunshine of the present. With the old, motherly, protecting love which had always been her attitude towards her motherless younger sister, it never once entered her head to relieve her own mind by speaking of the matter to Nancy. To Elspet, she laughed at and made light of it, but none the less, she went about her household concerns that morning with a graver face and a sedater step than usual. When she met the lovers again at dinner, she was at first silent and absent, so much so that Nancy began to banter her, declaring *she* seemed most like a love-sick maiden, and to speculate as to whether any of the gay chevaliers she had met at Prince Charlie's court had anything to do with her abstraction. Seeing that her gravity was observed, Barbara laughed off her sister's banter; and, making a strong effort, forced herself to join in the merry conversation.

The more she saw of him, the more she was attracted by young Macdonald, and the more she felt convinced that her sister's happiness was in good and safe hands, and gradually the fears that old Elspet's auguries had induced became fainter and fainter, till at last they disappeared altogether, and she joined with all her heart in the happy talk and laughter of the others. After dinner, young Macdonald took his leave, and the two sisters sat down together on the broad window-seat of the old hall, to talk over all that had happened to each of them during their first separation.

"Well, Babby," said Nancy, nestling close up to her elder sister, "and how do you like Alaster, now that you have seen him at last?"

"Very much, my darling," said Barbara, stroking fondly the clustering chestnut curls that drooped over her shoulder, "so much, that I think, after all, I must be content to let him have the largest share in my little sister's heart," she added, half sadly.

"No, no, not that, Babby, nobody can ever be to me what you have been."

Barbara smiled fondly, and shook her head. "It's no use, Nancy dear," she said, "there is something stronger than even a sister's love, and it has come to you, I saw it in your eyes this morning."

"Indeed, Babby, it's no such thing, I love Alaster dearly; but I wouldn't give your little finger for his whole body. I only saw him the other day, and haven't you nursed me and loved me ever since I was a baby?"

But Barbara only smiled and said, "It's all true, Elfie, but it's no use reasoning about it, I saw it in your eyes. And it's all right, dear, that it should be so," she added tenderly, "you know the Bible tells us that 'a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife.' God meant it to be so, Elfie, and it's only our selfishness that objects."

"I don't know about 'father and mother,'" grumbled Nancy, "but the Bible says nothing about sisters, and I know I wouldn't leave you for all the husbands in broad Scotland."

"Well well, dear, it's all right, I'm not going to lose my little sister, I'm only going to get a big brother you know, and a right noble brother too, or I'm much mistaken."

A softened happy light shone in Nancy's brown eyes as she nestled closer to her sister and said, "I thought you would like him, Barbara."

"Now Nancy, tell me all about the wooing; you're far before me you see, and know all about it; and poor me, who never had a real lover, would like just to know how they set about it."

"Oh Barbara! such nonsense," laughed Nancy, "*you* not had a real lover, when I came in on the Laird of Newhaugh down on his knees in the hall, and his wig all gleet with tearing it in his despair, and young Graham, of Lochabers, that told papa, "By Jove, sir, she's the finest young woman between Land's End and John o' Groats, and if she'll marry me, I'll never swear another oath, sir, and go to church once every Sunday;' and—"

"Hush, hush, lassie, do you call *these* true lovers, I want to know how people go about it when its the real thing, and not make-believes like that."

Then smiling and hiding her blushing face on her sister's shoulder, Nancy told how the sweet old song had been sung to her, and the twilight closed around them still sitting in the window-sill of the darkening room, and their voices grew lower and more hushed, and their hearts opened more freely to each other as the twilight deepened. Ah! how often did that holy twilight hour of perfect confidence and love recur to Barbara's mind when the shadows that fell around them were deeper and gloomier than those shades of evening in the old, darkening hall! They were still sitting there, almost silent now, when the rumble of wheels on the gravel outside, and a loud bark from Oscar startled them from their quiet reveries. The

front door was opened by a hand that evidently understood its fastenings, and before the girls had time to reach the passage the hall door also was opened, and, by the light of a lantern which he held in one hand, the girls recognised their father, muffled up, though he was, in a large travelling cloak and cap which nearly concealed both face and figure.

"Papa!" exclaimed Nancy, starting forward eagerly.

"Hush, hush, my dear," said Colonel Forbes, putting his finger on his lips, "I do not wish it known to any but you and Barbara, and old Elspet that I and this gentleman, pointing to another muffled figure, which, the girls now for the first time, discerned in the passage, "are in the house; we are here," he added, lifting his hat, "on the king's business. Barbara, my dear," turning to his eldest daughter, "tell Elspet to get the best room ready speedily for this gentleman, he must needs be tired with travel, and make ready what supper you can at once."

Barbara went immediately to fulfil her father's orders, and as she passed nearer the stranger, and for a moment met his eyes, she started and stood still for a moment, but instantly recovering her self-possession she proceeded on her errand.

Her father and the stranger exchanged glances, and then the latter stepping forward and throwing down his travelling cap on the table, exclaimed with a laugh, "By my troth, Forbes, it's of little use, bright eyes will be sharp eyes too, your fair daughter hath not forgot the galliard I danced with her at Edinburgh."

A shadow came over the Colonel's face as he said hesitatingly, "Is it prudent sire? I could answer for my daughter's loyalty with my life, yet your majesty's fortune is a terrible die to hang on the discretion of a young maiden," and he glanced uneasily at Nancy who stood gazing amazedly at the young stranger, whose long curling locks of yellow hair had at once betrayed him, on the removal of his cap, as the far-famed and ill-fated Charles Stuart.

"Nay, then I too will answer for your fair daughter's discretion with my life," said the young Chevalier, "and in proof thereof, I have this moment put my life in her hands; lips like those were never made to betray the unfortunate."

"Nay, sire, a Forbes of Milla Forres, man or woman, was never known to betray friend or foe, much less their

lawful sovereign" answered the old man with a trace of hauteur in his voice. "Now help your sister to provide the best that Miller Forbes has to offer to the future king of Scotland."

When Nancy was gone the young Chevalier sat down somewhat dejectedly by the table. "Hardly so sure to be king of Scotland yet my trusty friend," he said sadly. "Shall Stuart ever be more than an exile on the throne of his fathers?"

"It is Scotland's fault, at least all true Scottish hearts," answered the old man, "and ere long it is not land too."

Here Elspet entered the room to lay the supper. The moment she saw the stranger who sat by the table she stood still and ornamented all over, and nearly let the supper tray fall, in her surprise and alarm.

The Chevalier laughed at her evident recognition, and said, "Your daughter is not the only one who has sharp eyes in this house, Miller Forbes."

"You needna fear for Elspet's fidelity sure," said the Colonel.

The Chevalier bowed to the old woman, with that stately courtesy which made him a favourite alike with rich and poor. "A proud woman," he said "you too are a friend of the unfortunate Charles Stuart!"

"Ay, ay, ay," said Elspet, curtsying over and over again, in her delight and confusion, "I am that and so were my forbears afore me, an' it's a proud woman is Elspet Forbes that her auld man should have been blest wi' a stoup o' ye, an' her auld hands baked the bread ye are to eat."

"Many thanks, my good woman the bread will be all the sweeter, I warrant, that it comes from a friend's hands. Come Miller Forbes, the mountain air has somewhat sharpened my appetite shall we begin upon my friend Elspet's good cheer!"

JEANIE MORRISON.

(To be continued.)

Report of a Meeting of the Council of Flies,

HELD FOR MUTUAL ENQUIRY AND ENLIGHTENMENT.

Subject.—"The Age of a Man"

MUCH conjecture having existed on this point, and it being considered a subject of the deepest interest to the fraternity of Flies, the meeting was numerously attended, and the most learned individuals of the race were expected to take part in the discussion.

Sir FLY THE DRAGON, being voted into the chair, remarked, that he felt unworthy to occupy a seat of so much honour; that he was painfully conscious he had not given the subject nearly the attention which had been bestowed on it by his friends, the Houseflies; that his avocations had rather called him away from that most wonderful being whom they had met to consider; and though he had had thereby the benefit of a larger range of observation, his roving life had debarred him the advantages resulting from systematic notice and steady calculations. Of one thing, however, he could assure the audience: wherever he had met with flies, aye, even with midges, who had given the subject their attention, they all deemed the views that would be presented to them at that meeting to be built on a foundation so firm, and the conclusions to rest on evidence so incontestable, that it was utterly impossible they could be overthrown. Certainty, absolute certainty, was written on their deductions, and if man, whom they discussed, were even himself to utter words suited to their comprehension, he would sooner believe that that sovereign being were himself deceived, or perhaps seeking to deceive them, than that their conclusions, drawn from premises so indisputable, could be mistaken. (Buzz, buzz, buzz, and great applause.)

The HOUSEFLY was now introduced, and when quietness was restored, he spoke as follows: Fellow *Diptera*, it is with much pleasure I announce the subject of debate proposed for the present hour: the Age of the Man, whom we frequently behold coming in and going out of this apartment, in which the whole of my life has been spent. As regards the facts that I shall bring before you, not only

can I rely on my own most careful observations, but I have the records of my ancestors, which I have found treasured in the dust of the chamber corners, and which extend over a period of six years. My first calculation regarding this man's age is based upon his increasing height. During my own life-time, I have not been able, even with the investigation of a fly's eye, to detect any perceptible difference. A film may have been spread over the cuticle of the head and shoulders, and there has been a decided lengthening of the tubes which abound on the upper surface of the head. It is probable that these furnish new material for height, and that the flesh gradually increases round their roots. But, compared with the antiquity of this wonderful, this colossal being, my own life is but as a moment. I am, therefore, very glad to have some data on which we can rely. A learned fly who lived six years ago—that, as you well know, is the record of an antiquity of which few remains are existing—this fly, my great-grandfather, six times removed, has given the most minute description of this same individual as he then appeared. I hold other documents bringing down evidence to the present moment of the identity of the individual. The step of a fly did at that period, even as it does now, measure the twentieth part of an inch. The record states that three flies successively made the journey from the sole of the man's foot to the crown of his head; that this journey was thrice repeated, and that the exact measurement of the individual was 1439 steps. We have no record from this time for four years, and then the measurement, conducted on improved scientific principles, amounted to 1440 steps. Within the last two years a difference has again been perceived of half a step, consequently we may reckon that in six years the man has made an increase of stature of three-fortieths of an inch; or, to simplify the calculation, one-tenth of an inch in eight years; or, more easily, one fly's step in four. Now, assuming that he has originated in a *molecule*, it is impossible for us to form any notion of the time that passed before the *proto-expanse*, which we now know as the sole of his foot, was formed; but supposing a uniformity in his growth—and we have no reason for believing that other agencies have been at work than those which we and our forefathers have observed—they are quite sufficient, give us but unlimited time, to account for his present appearance. And here we may form some esti-

mate of his age: 1440 steps multipled by 4 (the number of years the growth takes to measure a step), amounts to 5760, and 2 for the half step makes the exact number of 5762 years during which the man—how amazed, if he understood fly language, would he be to know the close and accurate calculations of which a fly's brain is capable!—yes, 5762 years, I repeat, at the lowest computation, must be the age of the individual man before us. (Buzz, buzz.) It is a space of time absolutely beyond our grasp. Consider how countless must have been, during that time, the flutterings of wings of ourselves and our ancestors—that momentary period by which all our ordinary calculations are reckoned. A learned friend of mine has started another hypothesis, very ingenious, and apparently borne out by a remarkable fact which he is to bring before the meeting. It will not, however, in any way overthrow my theory of the amazing antiquity of the man. Nay, it rather opens out another thought, which may multiply my thousands by tens of thousands; and, oppressed with the vast weight of years, too many by far for an insect of the day to calculate, I leave the subject, feeling assured that, however astonishing the period may seem, it is as certain as the many eyes which have so illuminated our understandings; and no fly, nor even man himself, can gainsay it. (Buzz, buzz, buzz, and prolonged applause.)

The FLY OF A NEW IDEA being now introduced, he advanced with some hesitation, and continued the debate:—It hardly becomes me in the presence of so distinguished an *anthropologist* as my friend who has just finished his discourse, to presume to speak; but he was pleased to admire the ingenuity of my hypothesis, and though not quite satisfied of its correctness, felt that it was not impossible but that future discoveries might verify the same. He therefore wished me to bring it forward before this learned assembly. My thought is this: instead of the original *molecule*, from which man is constructed, being found in the sole of the foot, I have reason to believe it is developed from the centre of his body. I have often rested on the central part of a man, and have felt, at regular intervals, distinct undulations of the surface. This makes me think that the seat of enlargement lies there; that the man was originally a partially developed *torso*; that then the head, afterwards the arms, and lastly, the legs, have been formed. The arms I place before the legs as being nearer this centre of

undulations—probably, of living energy. I am strengthened in this belief, by having been able to make very minute observations on the sole of his foot. I am a hoary-headed fly now, approaching my ninetieth day. I and my friend Fly Inquiry, at that time living in an apartment above this, had our attention directed to this subject, and, as in that room two of the human species slept, we determined to use our finest instruments for mensuration, and to report, night after night, the changes which we might observe. Neither of us could find the least difference in the upper surface of the foot, but in the sole—now observe, this is according to my theory of gradual increase towards the extremities—there was a perceptible thickening, and the substance grew harder. (Buzz, buzz). I can speak of seventy-three days' experience, and the difference is exactly the twentieth part of a step. Now observe the exactness of the calculation: the twentieth part of a step in seventy-three days would be equal to the fourth of a step in one year, or to the half step which has been observed in the last two years. (Buzz, buzz, and applause). I have, however, during the last thirty days made a still more startling discovery. At the extreme end are five digits, a portion of whose surface is covered with a hard bony substance. It is in this the growth is most surprising. If it is, as my hypothesis would lead us to believe, the last extension of the *molecule*, these horny substances are destined to play a very important part in the yet undeveloped history of man. During these thirty days, there has been at least two steps of increase. At this rate, it would, during a year, be equal to more than an inch. Then think, if man live yet a thousand years, and the same rate of growth continue, think of the enormous claws that would be formed, ploughing, or digging, or mining the whole surface of the earth. (Much buzzing). There is but one objection to this anticipation. My friend who made observations, similar to my own, on the other human being, after watching a growth of the horny part at the same ratio as the specimen I investigated, found, on the fourteenth day of observation, all the additional substance had disappeared, and it was reduced to a somewhat lower level than before. But why should we for a moment think that a phenomenon wholly unaccountable, observed on one individual of the human species, must be common to all? No symptoms of

separation of the new from the old substance could be detected by me; and is there anything improbable in the supposition, that these horny organs are destined for a gigantic growth, when we consider the size of the trees, which are evidently not nearly so important in creation as man, and still more, when we read in the records of our forefathers of the erection, sometimes during the life of a single fly, of a habitation measuring 6000 steps in height as well as in length and breadth? (Loud and continued buzzing).

The BEE, the most learned geometrician of the party, now rose, and the Houseflies warmly applauded a lady, the powers of whose mathematical mind, they were conscious, far exceeded those of their own. The lowest hum was silenced, and the meeting paid the most marked attention. The Bee fully believed, with the last speaker, that man had been developed from a centre rather than a basis; but she considered that the original point was in the head rather than in the heart. She supported her opinion by observing, first, the much greater consolidation of the head. In order to ascertain the fact she had twice risked her life by digging into man with her sting. On one occasion she chose the crown of his head; but, pointed as the instrument was, she could penetrate a very short way below the surface, owing to the exceeding hardness of the structure. On another occasion she chose, what she believed was called, the calf of the leg; and then the softness of the flesh was such that she could have remained digging in as deep as the instrument would allow, had not a sudden shriek and convulsive movement, and the direction to her of flashing eyes—those eyes in the monster she so much dreaded—made her feel that life was more than present pleasure or scientific knowledge, and drawing up her sting she flew through the open window with the utmost speed. Are not, continued she, dryness and hardness characteristic of age? Who would think that *alluvial* mud was older than granitic rock—man does not, I know—and is it not within the compass of Bee knowledge that the flower is younger than the stem? Then who would imagine that the fleshy leg is older than the bony head? But I have other proofs. We have only to look round this room, and we see representations of the half-formed man. As it happens, we see him in four different stages. Over the chimney-piece is simply a head, the first stage of man;

on this side, his head and shoulders; there, opposite us, is the body partly developed, and the arms likewise; whilst underneath the head is hung a picture of the perfect man as we now see him. Could evidence be more conclusive? There is man in different ages, drawn by man's own hand; and were our lives prolonged, we might see the nails extending and perhaps branching out until they rose from the feet like the antlers of a stag, aye, and perhaps leaves may grow upon them, and they become walking trees, to shadow man, or even fruit-bearing trees, so that he may be destined yet to be developed into a self-supporting organisation. (Buzz, buzz, and tremendous applause). But I am indulging in speculations of the future, instead of quietly making known my calculations of the past. These are somewhat abstruse and will require much study. I have therefore written them in honey on a rose leaf, and will leave them with you. I have reckoned the probable time for the formation of head, body, limbs, etc., and you will find that instead of 6000 I must have 20,000 years for the growth of the man. The thick part of the body must have required a much longer time than the slighter limbs, and the arms alone must have taken many centuries. I have only one more remark to make. Not having confined myself to one room, like my esteemed friends the Houseflies, I have observed more varieties of the human being than they have, and I feel there is something very anomalous in the tubes on the surface of the head. It is undoubtedly the special formation of the present epoch of man. Though the pictorial records of the past and careful scientific research show the successive eras of heads, arms, legs, etc., I have never witnessed personally a half-formed man; but the different stages of hair-growth are now visible to one, like myself, of somewhat extended observation. From this, I imagine that mankind are not all contemporaneous. The limbs being equally developed, whether the species is large or small, marks them of one period in creation, but the hair probably reveals an earlier or later formation during that epoch. Some with hair of great length, thirty inches long, I imagine to be the most aged; and others where no hair is on the top of the head, only, so to speak, around the edges, I have no doubt are the youngest. This capillary formation is, to my mind, the most interesting part of the structure of man, at least to bees and flies, for

it most nearly resembles parts of our own organisation. I trust I have not trespassed too long on your attention, but I am glad to add the stores of knowledge which I have gathered to the elucidation of this great subject,—"The Age of a Man." The Bee resumed her seat amidst the loudest demonstrations of applause.

Sir FLY THE DRAGON rose to propose that the cordial thanks of the meeting be given to the Houseflies and Bee, who had bestowed so much time and attention on these matters, and who had made such abstruse calculations, that proofs had been most conclusively adduced to show that the age of a man was altogether beyond the calculation of an insect. It was enough, he continued, to cause quite a flutter of the wing, to remember the absurd notions that they had at one time held, and which their fathers devoutly believed, even that the life of a man seldom reached a hundred years. Away with such a midge-like idea! Man's days are not like those of a fly to be easily reckoned. Generations after generations of *diptera* must pass away, but this man would still exist, and that with a development of which their most flying imaginations—surely, that is descriptive of the flights of a fly's mind—must fall immeasurably short. (Buzz, buzz.) To you, my most learned friends, I again repeat, the thanks of this meeting are most cordially tendered. At this there was much buzzing and applause, which was interrupted by

A quiet old FLY in the corner rising to make a few remarks. He said,—I feel not less than Sir Fly the Dragon how much we are indebted to our very learned friends who have favoured us with the result of their patient researches and abstruse calculations. I cannot, and therefore I dare not, contradict their assertions; but there are a few questions that *will* revolve in my brain, and which, even after listening to their learned discourses, I only feel to be more importunate than before. I have a natural dislike to take things for granted, and I like facts better than hypotheses. I receive as facts—for the testimony seemed conclusive—that the man whose age we met to discuss has grown the step of a fly in four years, and that he now measures 1440 steps. But where is the proof that for a number of years—my brain cannot hold the number; I painfully feel it is but the brain of an old fly—he has grown in the same ratio? It seems also a fact that the tubes on the upper surface, and the horny

substances at the digital extremities, are growing at a much more rapid rate If ratio changes with distance, why not with time also? The argument of the increase from the head downwards, borne out by pictures is admirable and nearly conclusive, but still my stupid old head, whose rusty gateway needs forcing with positive proof, inquires, Is it not possible that man might draw the head and leave the limbs unrepresented? The pictures, he thought, militated against the theory of the hair being the last development, as one of the head alone had the hair very abundant.

Here the BEE rose and said —Not at all, it rather favours my theory, that mankind, though coeval are not contemporaneous. The present is the epoch of the foot formation. The hair, which belongs to the oldest formation—the head—has been, I gather from the pictures common to all, and, as each formation is perfected, is probably cast off, even as we insects do the shell of our chrysalis. (Buzz great approbation)

The old FLY bowed, and continued —It is possible, but again, it was thought that the hardness of the head proved its antiquity. What is thought then, of the hardness of the horny, digital substance now in course of formation! [The Bee looked much displeased, changed her buzz into a hiss, which was taken up by the assembly, and the interruption lasted some time] At last the old Fly continued his speech —Excuse me for not giving implicit credence to the theories advanced. It is my matter-of-fact brain that thinks the proofs inconclusive (increased murmurs), and however interesting the enquiries, I am not better informed than before of the age of this wonderful being who sits beside us. Let us, then, speak diffidently, for, if he understand our words, they may possibly seem to him as ridiculous in their absurdity as to us they appear great in their wisdom. (Renewed disapprobation) I fear my incredulity of the theories advanced is distasteful to you, but my aged grandfather, with a peculiar turn of his venerable proboscis, has often said, "My son, be careful, lest thou fly beyond thy flight. Flies are not made to follow the lark. They have the gift of a wonderful eye; blessed with a reflective, but not a reasoning, power. Meddle not thou, therefore, with what thou canst not calculate." (Hissing and great disapprobation.)

The sound of the commotion roused the man, and the

insects' eyes, quite fitted to detect in an atom of a moment that his eye was directed towards them, gave speedy information of his intentions, and in an instant the council was dissolved and the *diptera* dispersed.

ALIQUA.

Serenade

COME to thy casement sweet my love!
All the night long I've watched for thee!
Come out with the glittering stars above
Waiting thy smile to see!
All weary life has sunk to rest,
All sounds in stillness sleep
And lingering here though yet unblest,
My patient watch I keep

Thou smil'st on the flowers that round thee throng,
Thou turn'st to the winds that to thee sigh,
Thou heedest the wild bird's pleading song,
But still unheard am I
The flowers will fade the birds will wing
Their flight over land and sea
But while time lasts my thoughts will cling
To thee, my love, to thee!

See now Aurora's golden ray
Night's drowsy eyes in brightness steeps!
Back from her wild dark brow away
Her diamond-starred hair she sweeps!
[illegible]
[illegible]
And hails [illegible] morning hymn—
One [illegible] world!

MELAWRA.

Milla Forres.

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER IV.

LORD PITSLIGO'S CAVE.

Ere day-break next morning, Colonel Forbes and his illustrious guest had quitted Milla Forres. Old Elspet was the only member of the household who was aware of their departure, for the Prince had protested so earnestly against disturbing his fair hostesses of the night before at such untimeous hours, that Colonel Forbes had at last given a reluctant consent to allow old Elspet to wait upon him at the hasty breakfast of which he partook before starting, without calling upon his daughters to minister to him with their own fair hands.

"Good morrow to you, my good woman; your bread was most excellent; it was easy to see that it was baked by loyal hands, and Charles Stuart thanks you for it kindly," said the Prince, as he leant from his saddle to hand back the empty quaigh from which he had just drunk his duch-an-dorich,—that unfailing "God speed you" of Highland hospitality,—and with it tried to slip a piece of gold into Elspet's hand; but the old woman drew it back.

"Na, na," she said, "ne'er shall it be said as a Forbes took siller for serving her lawfu' Prince, an' he in trouble. Mony thanks to your majesty, a' the same," she added, curtseying low.

"But, my good woman, it would ill become Charles Stuart to allow such faithful service to go unrewarded," said the Prince; "if you will not take the money, how shall I reward your services?"

"Ah sir, ye'r Majesty, I mean, there's service an' service, an' there's a service that can mither be boucht nor yet paid for wi' siller."

"True, my good woman; I did not mean to pay you for your loyal affection that, I know, I could never do, but I would give you something to show that Charles Stuart is not ungrateful."

"Ye hae paid me ower and ower again, yer Majesty, when ye deigned to thank auld Elspet wi' yer ain lips,

for the trifle o' service she has done ye; but gin ye wad gie me something to mind me that I hae been sae honoured, gie me a siller groat, that I can wear roun' my neck to my dying day."

The Chevalier drew a ring from his finger, and saying kindly, "There, my good woman, that will be as good a keepsake as a siller groat," he struck his spurs into his horse, and rode hastily away, followed by Milla Forres, leaving old Elspet curtseying to the ground.

The first streaks of dawn were just beginning to break over the hill tops as they rode up the glen, and the first stir among the birds, and first rustle of the leaves, to foretell the coming day. The hills loomed large in the half-twilight, and the morning star was still shining brightly as they wound along over the rugged mountain road. The Chevalier rode on in silence, evidently buried in painful thought, and Colonel Forbes respected his abstraction. As the day-light broadened, and sounds of life began to be heard in the various Highland cottages which they passed, Colonel Forbes' face grew more watchful and anxious. He looked sharply at the occasional shepherds whom they met in those mountain solitudes, and started if they encountered a bare-footed Highland lass carrying her pitcher to the mountain burn. The Chevalier, on the other hand, rode along as if unconscious of all around him, and Colonel Forbes had to repeat his whispered suggestion to muffle himself more completely in his cloak, several times before he seemed to hear it As the morning wore on, mists began to gather on the hill-tops, and gradually rolling down their rugged sides, filled the valley between, and enveloped the two horsemen in their dusky folds. Then, for the first time, Prince Charles broke the long silence. Pointing with his riding whip to the mist rolling on to meet them, he said—

"Ay, Milla Forres, I fear it is even with the fate of the House of Stuart as with this morning's promise,—bright at the dawning, but settling ere noon into mist and darkness."

"Nay, my liege," answered his companion; "the mists of his native hills do but conspire, with the true hearts that dwell under their shadow, to shelter the heir of Scotland from the eyes of his enemies, till the time be come when he may sit fearlessly, in open day, on the throne of his fathers."

The Prince smiled sadly.

"You have a ready wit, Milla Forres, yet I fear my

figure was the truer. Do we approach this cave where we are to meet my Lord of Pitsligo?

"Yes, sire; yonder are the Boulders of Buchan, in half an hour we shall be there."

The road now wound along the top of the magnificent crags that overhang the sea on the north coast of Aberdeenshire; rocks inaccessible save to the wild sea mew that builds her nest on their crags, with the mighty northern ocean dashing at their feet. They passed the bay of Aberdour, smiling and sunny now, as if it had never sucked into its depths—"full fifty fathoms down"—Sir Patrick Spens and his "merry men a'." A little past the fatal bay, Colonel Forbes, first looking cautiously round to see that no straggling fisherman was in sight, signalled to the Prince to dismount, and carefully tying their horses to a ring fastened under an overhanging cliff, he led the way over the face of the rock, clambering painfully on hands and knees, and looking back anxiously, at every moment, to see how the Prince followed him down the perilous path. Charles Stuart had been trained to athletic sports from his boy-hood, and the hardships of his adventurous life, acting upon a nature constitutionally brave and hardy, had innured him to an utter fearlessness of danger, which had no small share in endearing him to a nation so rugged, enduring, and contemptuous of danger, as the Scotch; and he followed his guide down the perilous descent, where the precipice literally hung over the dashing waters beneath, with unfaltering footstep and unwavering eye. Perhaps, next to his misfortunes, and the romance of his position, this hardy courage had the greatest influence in deepening the hold the Jacobite cause had taken in the Highlands of Scotland.

When they had climbed about half way down the cliff, Colonel Forbes drew aside the branches of a small shrub which grew on the face of the rock, and kneeling carefully down, signing the Prince to follow him closely, he crawled on hands and knees into what seemed a little crevice in the rock, and disappeared from view. Following his example, the Prince likewise crawled into the darkness. After a few moments they found the crevice gradually widening and becoming lighter, till at last they were able to stand upright in what appeared to be a little subterranean room of about eight feet square. As soon as the dim light of the cave enabled him to distinguish objects, the Prince saw before him the figure of a tall, venerable looking old

man, standing with uncovered head before him, who would have knelt and kissed his hand, but the Prince prevented him; grasping his hand warmly in his own, and saying as he did so—

"Nay, my lord of Pitsligo, we come as grateful guests to an honoured host, when we visit you here in a retreat more honourable to you than any castle in broad Scotland." The old man's eyes glistened as he answered—

"My liege, since you have thus honoured it, this cave will be a prouder dwelling place to me than any palace in the land. Will you be pleased also to honour my humble fare?" he added, drawing near to a rude table carved in the rock, on which was spread a substantial meal. The travellers gladly accepted the courtly old man's invitation, for a forty mile's ride had whetted their appetites. As his eyes became more accustomed to the twilight of the cave, the Prince looked more attentively at the noble face and figure of his venerable host, and marvelled at the massive calm of the broad brow, and the gentle benevolence of the full blue eyes. Constitutionally sensitive to atmospheres, his spirits began to rise as he thought that this man was one of his chief supporters. Frivolous and wavering as Charles Stuart often showed himself, there was a chord somewhere in his nature that always thrilled to nobility, in whatever shape he found it, and he bowed himself immediately in the presence of the intellectual and moral grandeur which he instinctively recognised in his venerable host. On his side, Lord Pitsligo, the literary friend of Fenelon and Madame Guyon, the quietest and the devout Christian, was no less attracted by the engaging manner and beautiful sad face of his royal guest. A Jacobite, at once in virtue of family tradition, of the strong natural conservatism of his refined nature, and of the generosity that ever clings to a falling cause, Lord Pitsligo had already risked lands and fame in the cause of the young man now sitting at his rock hewn table, and the time was not far distant when he should gladly risk even life itself for his sake, and when the cave, which now afforded him only a convenient place of concealment for a dangerous meeting, should be the only shelter of his declining years.

CHAPTER V.

ALASTER'S MISSION.

THE little party in the cave soon got into earnest discourse, while partaking of the plentiful, if somewhat rude repast provided for them. There was need of wise counsel as well as of strong hands, in the present position of Prince Charles' affairs, and he listened eagerly to the sagacious advice and fatherly cautions of the kind and wise old man. It had been well for Charles Stuart if he had listened as attentively to the veteran's words when his throne hung in the balance at Carlisle, and his own fatal folly lost the game. The conversation was carried on in low eager whispers, for, far as they seemed to be from the possibility of being overheard, the habit of secrecy had grown so strong that they instinctively drew close together, and lowered their voices as they consulted over the plans of their campaign. Suddenly, in the midst of their whispered discourse, they were startled by what sounded like a movement among the branches of the shrub that concealed the entrance to the cave. They broke off their conversation in an instant, and sat rigid and motionless, every power of their being absorbed in the one act of listening. Again there is distinctly a rustle among the branches. Prince Charles seized his gun, and pointed it at the mouth of the cave. He was on the point of drawing the trigger, when old Lord Pitsligo laid a restraining hand upon his arm.

"The report may betray us, my liege," he whispered, "if it be needful, we have other weapons," laying his hand on the dirk which hung by his side. Unmistakeably now there is some one in the narrow passage which forms the entrance to the cave. Lord Pitsligo moved to the door, and holding his dirk ready in his hand, said in a low voice,—

"Who comes there?"

"A friend," replied a low voice from the passage.

"A bold one then, since he comes with his life in his hand. Friend nor foe shall enter here till he tells his name and errand."

"My name is Alaster Macdonald, of Castle Ronald," answered the voice, "and my errand to warn Charles Stuart of treachery."

"Alaster Macdonald!" exclaimed Colonel Forbes, "nay,

this *must* be a traitor. I left Alaster Macdonald in Glen Forres not eight hours ago; Pitsligo, guard the entrance." Prince Charles' hand again rests on the trigger, but Lord Pitsligo again restrains him.

"Nay, my liege, traitors are ever cowards, and it is no coward that hath ventured on hands and knees through that passage to face three desperate men; besides, methinks I recognise the voice." By this time the adventurous new-comer had crawled to the door of the cave, and now stood erect in the half-twilight; his kilt was covered with mud, and dripping with water, and his jacket half torn from his back.

"By my troth," exclaimed Colonel Forbes, "it is verily none other than young Castle Ronald, whom I left courting my daughter in Glen Forres!" But how came you here, sirrah?" he asked, his brow darkening, "and who betrayed to you the king's secrets? By my troth, if it be daughter of mine—"

"Colonel Forbes," interrupted the young man eagerly, "time presses, the enemy are on the track; if you would save your king, ask no questions, and follow me." Colonel Forbes' brow grew yet blacker.

"How, sirrah, shall we follow, who know not if our leader be a true man or a traitor?" The young man straightened himself haughtily.

"Think you, Colonel Forbes, traitor had faced that passage, knowing it so guarded?" Then turning to the Prince, and bending his knee, he said, "I beseech you, my liege, if you value your life, follow me." The Prince hesitated, and Colonel Forbes laid his hand uneasily on his dirk. Lord Pitsligo had stood closely watching the young man during this conversation; he now turned to the Prince.

"Follow him, my liege, this is no traitor."

"I can take but one with me," said Macdonald, "more were observed, but they may not find the entrance to the cave and, if they should, you are safe, my lord," turning to Pitsligo, "when the Prince is gone. Colonel Forbes," he added, "I hope when you come to know Alaster Macdonald better, you will trust him more. My liege, follow me, as swiftly as you may. My boat lies at the foot of the cliff."

"At the foot of the cliff," exclaimed both Forbes and Pitsligo together.

"A wild goat could not scale the Reefer's Rock," added Lord Pitsligo.

"I have scaled it just now," said the young man. "My liege," he added, "I beseech you, do not hesitate; delay is death."

"I follow you," said Charles Stuart resolutely, "lead the way."

On hands and knees the two crept through the narrow passage, on to the face of the Reefer's rock. When he saw the fearful over-hanging precipice, and heard the wild waves dashing at its base, and playing with the tiny skiff which was moored at the foot of the rock, for a moment the Prince grew pale, and his brain swam; but summoning up his great personal courage, he followed his companion dauntlessly. Now clambering on hands and knees over water-courses, now swinging themselves from point to point of the projecting cliffs by some straggling tree root, now springing over chasms—at last they reached the bottom of the cliff. A half-audible "Thank God" burst from Alaster Macdonald as the Prince set his foot upon the shingle of the little beach where his skiff was moored. With practised hand he undid the moorings, and the little boat, with its precious freight, was soon tossing on the dashing waters.

To explain Alaster Macdonald's unexpected appearance, I must go back in my story to the morning of that eventful day at Milla Torres. Barbara and Nancy Forbes had sat up long the night before, talking over their unexpected visitor, and when they left their rooms rather later than usual on the following morning, they were much surprised to hear from old Nancy that their father and his illustrious guest had left the house before day-break.

"Guid go wi' him, he's a braw gentleman, an' kens a guid bannock when he sees it," added old Elspet, as she recounted, with no small pride shining in her honest old eyes, her farewell conversation with the young Chevalier. As the two girls were sitting down to breakfast, Nancy's quick eyes spied Alaster Macdonald riding up the avenue.

"Barbara," she exclaimed, "there's Alaster coming, do you think we may tell him about the Prince? I know he would like so much to hear all about him, and you know what a true Prince Charles' man he is?" But Barbara shook her head.

"No, little one," she said, "you must try your powers of keeping a secret, even from Alaster, you know we promised father to tell *no one*." Nancy looked disappointed; but, loyal to the bottom of her warm little heart,

she did not for a moment question the rightness of her sister's decision, and they both received Alaster as if nothing particular had happened since their last meeting. The stream of pleasant talk flowed on, and all three round the breakfast table were more than usually gay and happy; their spirits always seemed to rise when together, as if each found something peculiarly exhilarating in the society of the others. At last Alaster said—

"By the way, has old Lauchlan M'Lauchlan begun to take 'a drappie' now and then?"

"Lauchlan M'Lauchlan, impossible!" exclaimed both the girls together.

"Why on earth do you ask such a question?" added Nancy.

"Well," said Alaster, "if he had'nt taken 'a drappie' this morning, he's gone suddenly 'wud,' that's all."

"Why, he's the soberest, *doucest* man in the country-side," said Barbara. "What can you be thinking of? What has he been about, Alaster?"

"As I passed his cottage, this morning," he answered, "he came limping out, with his crutch under his arm, and his face all flushed, and caught hold of my horse's bridle; and I noticed that his hands were trembling so that he could hardly hold it. I said, 'Good morning to you, Lauchlan, my man, what is it you want to-day?' It was a long time before he seemed able to make any answer at all, and when he did, he only said—'Maister Macdonald, there are bloodhounds watching the cave on the Reefer's Rock,' and he hobbled away back to to his house again." Nancy laughed merrily.

"The idea of old Lauchlan getting excited about anything, he must have gone 'wud,' as Alaster says, Barbara, and what on earth could put bloodhounds in his dottled old head? there's not such a thing in the country-side." Barbara did not answer; and not attaching any importance to the old man's words, neither her sister nor Alaster noticed that she had grown suddenly pale. The breakfast was nearly over, and soon after they rose from table, without any more having been said on the subject.

"I am tired, Nancy," said Barbara, "Would you mind telling Elspet I'll come to the kitchen in an hour?"

"Halloh! Barbara, *you* shirking the housekeeping," laughed her younger sister, "Elspet will think my carelessness infectious; I'm so glad she'll have a crow to pluck with you next," she added, as she ran laughing from the

room. The instant she was gone, Barbara rose and shut the door, and turning to Alaster, who now noticed, for the first time, that her face was perfectly white, she said hurriedly,—

"Alaster, let me speak to you while she is gone. That old man's words had a meaning; hush," she added, as he seemed going to answer, "there is no time to lose, I must tell you before Nancy comes back. I am going to trust you very far; it is a matter of life and death, I know you will be faithful."

"I will," he answered firmly, "so help me God!"

"Alaster, the Prince slept here last night; he and my father have gone to the Reefer's Rock." The young man started, and grew pale in his turn. "You understand now," she added, "what the blood-hounds meant, the king's men must be on his track, he must be warned."

"I will warn him," said the young man quietly.

"I knew you would, but it will be very dangerous. Oh, how I wish I could do it myself, but my going would only attract attention, and double the danger. Oh, Alaster, I cannot bear to ask you to do it, they are armed and desperate, and may take you for a spy; and that entrance to the cave,—but what can I do?"

"Trust me, dear Barbara," he said gently, "if human power can save them, I will."

"But you—oh how I wish I could go myself."

"Dear sister," he said, taking her hand gently, "do not fear for me, I will take every precaution; you would not have me to break my allegiance."

"No, anything but that," she said, "and yet— hush," she added, "do not frighten poor Nancy," as she heard her sister coming singing up the stairs.

"Trust me," he said, in a low voice, as Nancy entered the room laughing merrily.

"Well, Barbara," she said, "as I told you, you'll have a nice crow to pluck with Elspet. Do you know what she said when I told her that you could'nt come to her for an hour?"

"No, let us hear," said Barbara, forcing herself to smile.

"She said, 'Guid preserve us gin Miss Barbara's gotten her head turned next; he's a braw gentleman the—", then, breaking off with a sudden laugh, remembering the secret she had to keep, she set her rosy lips firmly together, and said, "But I won't tell you another word about it."

(*To be continued.*)

Beatrice.

"Thou takest not away, O Death!
Thou strikest—absence perisheth;
Indifference is no more;
The future is all-glowing bright,—
For on the past has fallen a light
That tempts us to adore"—*Wordsworth.*

NOT at once did Dante struggle, through the pain and depression of his bereavement, to the solace he found in the work for which it was destined to prepare him. In his own forcible words, we give an incident of the first anniversary of Beatrice's death:—"On that day which fulfilled the year since my lady had been made a citizen of eternal life, remembering me of her as I sat alone, I betook myself to draw the resemblance of an angel upon certain tablets. And while I did this, chancing to turn my head, I perceived that some were standing by me, to whom I should have given courteous welcome, and that they were observing what I did; also, I learned afterwards, that they had been there awhile before I perceived them. Perceiving whom, I arose for saluation, and said, —'Another was with me.'"

And in less innocent occupations than painting and poetry, he evidently tried for awhile to forget his grief. There are indications of a period of recklessness and wild living, succeeded by a religious reaction, which probably caused him to enter the third order of the Franciscans; and it is clear that about two years after the death of his lady, love appears again as a great power in his life. A fair lady, beholding him from a window, seemed greatly to compassionate him. At first he sought her company, because something in her air and paleness reminded him of his lost Beatrice, but at last, he began to rejoice in it for her own sake. The thought of her became too pleasant to him, and, with bitter reproaches to himself for his infidelity, he yet meditates whether this may not be a rescue provided by love from his sorrow through the sweet means of this compassionate lady. But no;—one day, at the ninth hour, he seemed in a vision to see again the glorious Beatrice, clothed in scarlet, and young as when he first beheld her, and his heart repented the inclination "with which it had so basely allowed itself to be possessed, despite the constancy of my reason; and all

my thoughts returned to their own most lovely Beatrice." At the same time, he took much to the study of philosophy, and read various Latin authors, "understanding," he says, "as much as was possible with the amount of grammar I possessed, and with a little assistance from my genius. By which genius I had already seen many things, as it were, in dreams, as may be seen in the Vita Nuova." We know from history that somewhere near this date, about 1292, Dante married Gemma Donati, the marriage being arranged by mutual friends, who hoped thus to cure him of his lasting grief. On this marriage, and on his wife, there is a complete and somewhat ominous silence throughout all his works. It is certain that, after his exile, they never met again, as she remained in Florence, where her kinsfolk belonged to the dominant faction. She had several sons and one daughter, Beatrice. Tradition speaks of the marriage as loveless and unhappy, but nothing by cotemporary writers wores than a fretful temper, is alleged to the discredit of Gemma during the nine years they lived together. However that might have been, Dante, after a period of restless misery, once more fixed his affections on the memory of what Beatrice had been, and his visions of what she was. He seems to have dwelt upon the thought of her with an ever-increasing joy, indeed, a sort of belief in real intercourse with her; and the Vita Nuova concludes with these remarkable words:—"Apparve a me una mirabile visione, nella quale vidi cose, che me fecero proporre di non dir più di questa benedetta, infino a tanto che io non potessi più degnamente trattare di lei. E di venire a ciò io studio quanto posso, si com 'ella sa veracemente. Sicchè, se piacere sarà di Colui, per cui tutte le cose vivono, che la mia vita per alquanti anni perseveri, spero di dire di lei quello che mai non fu detto d'alcuna. E poi piaccia a Colui, ch'è sire della cortesia, che la mia anima se ne possa gire a vedere la gloria della sua donna, cioè di quella benedetta Beatrice, che gloriosamente mira nella faccia di Colui, *qui est per omnia sæcula benedictus.*"

> "Beloved, O my brother—sorrow worn,
> Even in that lady's name who is thy goal,
> Sing on till thou redeem thy plighted word."

So wrote Cino da Pistoia in a sonnet addressed to Dante; for this purpose, to write more worthily concerning Beatrice, was known many years before the first book of the Commedia—the *Inferno*—appeared in 1307. Mean-

while, Dante, already so deeply wounded in the affections, had fallen into other misfortunes, which lasted all his life. After being raised to the chief magistracy of Florence, the highest point of ambition to a citizen, he departed on an embassy to Rome, never to return; for a faction meanwhile overthrew his party as tainted with Ghibilinism, his house was plundered, himself exiled, and an edict issued shortly afterwards, condemning him, in case of his return, to be burnt alive. Among other property lost at first, but afterwards recovered by Gemma, were the first seven cantos of the *Inferno*, written, however, not in Italian, but in Latin. These seem to have been sent five years later to Marquis Malaspina, under whose protection Dante then lived, and probably decided him to re-write and continue his great work. The hopes of ambition had proved as disappointing to him as the joys of love; but his misfortunes seem henceforth to have nerved him to place his affections and his aspirations higher, and from this time the *Commedia* was the work of his life. A wandering life—now in far countries as a poor scholar, attending the disputations of the universities, certainly in Paris, perhaps in Oxford; now lingering as near his still loved Florence as he dared; now staying at some one or other of the minor courts of the petty tyrants of Italy, but always homeless, without ties, without possessions—we cannot wonder that the man brought up in easy competence, accustomed to honour and triumph in his native city, should have bitterly realised how "salt was the bread of others," and how weary the "ascent of other men's stairs." Various hopes for him flickered at times on the political horizon, but none were fulfilled; and deep disappointment at the failure of the last,—an embassy he undertook for a friendly noble to the Venetians,—is said to have hastened his death, at the age of fifty-eight, at Ravenna. He did not long survive the completion of the *Paradiso*, though his last work was a free translation of the Penitential Psalms into Italian verse, with some additions of his own. From first to last, Beatrice is the presiding genius of the great poem in which we will now trace her; always remembering that first and chiefly, the best commentators agree Dante meant us to recognise the real woman, Beatrice Portinari, his early love, though he wished also to figure in her, not Theology, for that appears separately, but the personification of blessedness in God. "This idealization of a beloved mistress," says Count Balbo,

" was done not only by Dante, but by Petrarch, and afterwards by many others, called, on that account, Platonists, some not being poets, but only lovers. These considered a virtuous and beloved mistress as a means of rising from vice to virtue, from earth to Heaven, from a devotion to material and base things to a comprehension of what was spiritual and divine, and even to God himself. This knowledge and adoration of God and blessedness in Him, is what we find figured under the name of Beatrice. The allegory does not destroy nor conceal the real image of Beatrice, but rather elevates and glorifies her in a manner which others have attempted, though none have succeeded like Dante."

And as, describing in the first canto of the *Inferno*, how, sore beset with enemies and his own sins, he had lost his way in the dreary forest, the first streak of light that glimmers in the dull horizon is when the envoy Virgil, the kindly guide, tells him he is sent by Beatrice; so she is still the inspiration and guiding light in the full glory of the last cantos of the *Paradiso*. We can fancy the pleasure with which Dante put in her mouth the words,—

' L 'amico mio e non della ventura,"

as, in his now darkened life, he could still dwell on the reality of that pure and true friendship. The lady has sped down to Limbo to rescue him; she is so pure and high, the evil atmosphere cannot hurt nor assail her, but it is no scene for her, and he does not meet her there. Dante has to toil through the awful abyss, and labour up the steep ascent of Purgatory, before the scene begins to grow beautiful, and the light clear, in preparation for her presence. Dante and Virgil have reached the groves of the earthly paradise, where the trees all bend one way, circled by a river

> " — — — With a brown, brown current,
> Under the shade perpetual, which never
> Ray of the sun lets in, nor of the moon,"

when a sudden lustre runs across the forest, a delicious melody is heard, angelic apparitions are seen, and then, amid a flight of angels scattering flowers, and singing *Benedictus qui venit*, appears a lady veiled in snowy white,— Beatrice herself, like the sun half veiled in vapour rising in the roseate eastern sky. He could not yet see her face, but his spirit trembled with awe, as only in that beloved long-lost presence, whose virtue had transfixed him before

his boyhood was past. The whole description is of the utmost beauty, it thrills with the bliss of re-union with her he loved best on earth, before she had "gone to her second state," but also with the feeling of the deep unworthiness of a stained and erring mortal in the presence of angelic purity.

"Guardami ben, ben son, ben son Beatrice,"

she says—words of overpowering delight, even when followed by reproaches for his wanderings in untrue ways, after her death had left him desolate; pursuing false images of good that "never any promises fulfil." Silent and abashed, Dante stands before her, and only when the angels sing again, and he hears in their sweet melodies,—

"Compassion for me more than had they said
O wherefore, lady, dost thou so upbraid him?"

does the ice congealed about his heart melt into sighs and tears, while she continues her rebuke, and elicits the answer,—

"'Weeping, I said · my steps were turned aside
By the false pleasure present things displayed,
Soon as your face was to my view denied.'"

"How differently," Beatrice replies, "should my death have moved thee.

"No lure to equal that fair form of mine
Now unto dust returned, did ever Art
Or Nature to attract thy heart design:
And if with all thy life's supreme delight,
Thy doom it was at my decease to part,
What mortal thing should have allured thy sight?
Thou should'st have left the treacherous joys of earth,
And followed me, who was no longer such,"

—words which are for ever to be cherished by those whose affections have been bereaved of their chief earthly object.

At last, when Dante passes the river Lethe, his purified eyes are allowed to rest on the unveiled countenance of his mistress; but he will not trust his poetry to describe her, who seemed more to exceed her former self than formerly she seemed to him to exceed others; or to dwell on the ten years' thirst for her presence that was at last satisfied, as he gazed on her. They were now re-united for the rest of the vision—a vision soon, he trusted, to be a glorious reality, when death should finally set him free. And now upwards through the spheres of Paradise they soar together, each fresh ascent he makes by the force of aspiration kindled

by the smile of Beatrice, which irradiates him with ever-increasing glory.

"O insensata cura de mortali,
Quanto son difettivi sillogismi,
Quei che ti fanno in basso batter l'ali!"—

he exclaims: they are toiling at jurisprudence and sacerdotalism,—ruling by force or by cunning,—engaged in commerce and war,—while he, far above the jars and miseries of this dark, confused world, was rapt in the bliss of his vision by the side of Beatrice. She, after her ten years' life among the angels was ready to answer all his questions and solve each doubt; and when at last she quits his side, it is only that he may last see her, above where he can yet rise, with hands clasped, praying for him.

Soon after the *Paradiso* was finished, Dante died in exile, but he had finished his work; his great poem was completed in all its symmetry, polished, regular, and perfected as a crystal. And he had well fulfilled his hope of writing about his lady what had not before been written of any woman. The memory of her short retired life, however beautiful, would probably have passed away with the next generation, had it not been for her poet lover, who has shown us, in the very spring of his genius, in the deepest pulses of his heart, her lovely image, and her ennobling influence.

We can best conclude the subject in Dante's own words, taken from the last address to Beatrice, in the thirty-first canto of the *Paradiso*, for in the last two cantos her name occurs no more, as though all personal thoughts were lost in the concluding hymn of praise.

"O! lady, in whom all my hope is strong,
And who endurèd to achieve my weal,
To leave thy footsteps traced in deeps infernal.

Of all the many things that I have seen
Through thy great power and thy beneficence
I recognise the grace, I own the virtue.

O, guard thine own magnificence in me,
So that my soul that thou to health has rendered,
May pleasing thee, rise from this mortal life."

E. J. O.

In Hiding after Culloden.

ROYAL ACADEMY, 1869.

SLEEP, bonnie gentleman, the long sad day is over,
Sleep, bonnie gentleman, the bloody field is fought;
Night's tresses dark sweep heavily the bleeding earth to cover,
And hide awhile the carnage, the Southron sword has wrought.

Sleep, bonnie gentleman, your gallant face is weary,—
Your white lips, how they shake, as you murmur in your sleep!
What sounds of horrid strife in your restless slumbers hear ye?
A soldier's rest, fair sir, should more dreamless be and deep.

How tight your hand is grasped on the broad-sword by you lying!—
The steel is dull and reddened, and flaw and dent are there;
How that awful blade has flashed in the wild eyes of the dying!
There are gore-smears on your fingers, and blood-drops in your hair.

But, oh! our own dear lad—lost, royal, noble Charlie,
This night, where is he hiding his sad discrowned head?
Is he flying through the midnight by lonely mountain passes?
Or crouching on the hill-side, the bracken for his bed?

Keep, O God, where'er he be, our heart's darling Prince from danger!
Stretch over him Thy hand, and protect him with Thy might;
God comfort Scotland's heart, and avenge Culloden's slaughter!
And, God save our own Prince Charles, and defend for aye the right!

MAS ALTA.

The Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy
FOR 1873.

ON entering the Exhibition of Paintings for 1873, the eye is at once struck by the great improvement visible in the arrangement of the rooms. The obstruction that formerly existed to the free entrance of the South Room is removed, so that a complete vista is at once obtained of the whole length from north to south. You see the statuary and sculpture facing you, and forming a noble background to the paintings lining the walls on either side. We do not, however, approve of another alteration that has been made by the new arrangements of the committee, and that is, the removal of the architectural drawings to the Small Octagon. They accorded so well with the water-colours in the North Room, that it is a pity to have altered their position; and by their proximity to the oils in the Small Octagon, the effect of both the one and the other is destroyed, besides obliging the committee, for want of room, we suppose, to hang a number of excellent oil paintings completely out of the line of view.

We do not think that, either in the quality or the quantity of the paintings exhibited, there is any falling off from former years. On the contrary, the progress that is made by our younger artists is most visible, and cannot fail to excite the attention of all those who make Scottish art a source of study and interest. Also, as regards the borrowed pictures, we have in the present exhibition more than half a dozen, which of themselves would repay the price of the season ticket which admits visitors to the paintings. And surely if art be regarded as the great outcome of a nation, if a people's progress and civilisation be measured by the poet's pen, the artist's pencil, or the sculptor's chisel, we have much reason to rejoice that in these things our little island holds its own among nations, and may well be proud of the stand that is taken in European fame by the men whose works we are now about to remark upon.

According to our usual plan, we will first examine the borrowed pictures that hang upon the walls before we proceed to the works of our own native artists. We begin, then, with No. 30, North Octagon, "The Marriage of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales," the property of Her

Majesty. All we have to say of this picture is, that it displays an amazing amount of work, that it is the largest piece of canvas we have ever seen upon these walls, and that Her Majesty's kindness in lending it permits all her loyal subjects to have an opportunity of witnessing the representation of a gorgeous pageant in which they were all interested. Probably no living artist would have accomplished so well the portrayal of these innumerable faces, these surprisingly well-arranged groups, as W. P. Frith, who is quite at home in English crowds and English character—witness his "Railway Station" and "Derby Day,"—

"And all went merry as a marriage bell."
"The light shone o'er fair women and brave men."

For the delineation of such scenes Frith shows himself to be peculiarly qualified. The groupings are so arranged, light colour, shade, and background are so admirably managed, that not one fair face is lost to view, not one stalwart noble but is well defined, so that we wonder, large as the canvas is, how it contains so much; and while the noble Bride and Bridegroom are the prominent objects of attraction, still all the surrounding royalty and nobility, although subsidiary, are well in sight and distinct.

We will now turn to a picture of a very different stamp. We allude to No. 431, South Octagon, "Chill October." This is the picture that excited so much attention in London when lately exhibited at the Royal Academy. Years ago, when Holman Hunt and Evrett Millais first rose upon the horizon of fame, and when people began to look on them, to criticise, to praise, and to blame, what one chiefly heard about Millais was his minute attention to details, his photographic accuracy in small objects, a butterfly's wing, a blade of grass, a bit of heather, or a small flower. The beautiful was of no account with him,—it must be reality, hard, dry, uncompromising reality,—with no imagination, no poet's heart and soul to lift him above the trivialities of detail. His accurate manipulation, the merit of his sharp and truthful pencil, were never denied; but it was alleged that the grand and general effect was lost or unheeded, while the spectator's mind was microscoped into an intent admiration of the minute rendering of small objects of still life in the foreground. He was also charged with violent colour. Bearing these criticisms in mind, we now ask the spectator to place himself before this wonderful exposition of living

nature. Here also is microscopic fidelity; look at these reeds in the foreground, at those burdocks in the middle distance, they start out from the canvas, and you fancy you could grasp them in your hand. But now raise your eyes from these things and survey the grand waste of waters before you, with the wonderful reflections of the dull white clouds above, watch the atmosphere of this picture, for it *has* an atmosphere, see the lights and shadows, they almost go and come, see miles and miles of water, trees, land, and then the blue misty Grampians rising in the far-off distance,—what breadth of treatment is here, what wonderful silence, utter stillness, complete repose, undisturbed even by the flight of swifts overhead, winging their way to summer regions, and leaving behind them the winter's storms and hurricanes, of which this grand repose of nature, in all its sweet melancholy, is in this chill October day the near precursor. In the far distance is a solitary pedestrian slowly walking towards those soft willows, gently bending before the rising breeze, which yet has scarce sufficient force to ruffle the broad bosomed Tay. This little touch of life is most poetical; too far away to jar upon our sense of silence, still it gives the one chord wanting to the scene, and makes us feel how oft we ourselves have wandered out on such a day, and with such sweet melancholy around us, with departed summer behind, and the storms and ice-bound ports of winter before.

In the South Octagon is also another landscape by a famous artist, No. 486, "The Mountain Torrent," by Peter Graham. We will confess at once we are disappointed in this picture. In the first place, the subject is too large for the canvas, and the middle distance has no chance in it; then that heavy, brooding, snow-like mist, stifling the hills in the background, approaches too close to the mountain torrent in the foreground. There is, however, great softness and richness of tone and colour. The heather-covered hills are smooth as velvet, but there is an air of overhanging sluggishness and heaviness in the atmosphere of the whole scene, increased by a want of force and strength in the mountain torrent, which fails to throw up its spray with any kind of lightness or vivacity.

Leaving the landscapes for our second notice, we will now look at No. 234, in the Great Room, Faed's well-known picture "From Dawn to Sunset," exhibited in

Edinburgh some years ago. This charming and most perfect picture must be familiar through the engraving to every one, so that it is of little use describing it. Faed is eminently the painter of humble life, and he has the rare and unusual gift of refining all he touches, of eliminating the coarse and vulgar element therein, remaining, however, always the painter of the "humble poor."

> "Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
> Their homely joys and destiny obscure,
> Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
> The short and simple annals of the poor."

In fact, Gray's lines invariably rise to one's memory when looking at Faed's productions. Both poet and painter seize upon what is beautiful and human to excite our sympathy and our love, leaving quite out of sight the painful and the degrading. The picture before us, of the humble cottage with its work-a-day inhabitants, overcome and enveloped in their present grief—the death of the old mother—calls upon our best sympathies as much and more than if it portrayed the death of one of the great ladies of the land, although true and faithful to every homely detail. No death scene we remember was ever more finely suggestive of the "Great Presence." We see it on the countenance of the dutiful and God-fearing son, in the uplifted warning hand of the good and comely housemother, in the hidden face of the loving daughter, in the chastened, awe-struck look and arrested attitude of the healthy, rosy children. All is in sympathy, every line that is drawn leads up to that one sentiment. The fragile life is departing, that for years and years has been reverenced, loved, and worked for by this affectionate, honest, godly family.

Faed has another picture not perhaps so widely known, No. 448, "Ere care begins." Here a mother is sitting by the side of her cottage. She has just laid down her healthy, happy babe upon her knee, soothed to sleep by the sweet nourishment it has taken from her bosom. How truly modest, good, and happy she looks. Her face and dress are a miracle of richly glowing colour. A sweet landscape spreads out before you, suggestive of the pure influence of nature, and of a mother's love and care.

Could lowly, unlearned life be always depicted as Faed brings it before us, there would be nothing in it that we could not admire and respect. But it is not always so depicted. Look at the Dutch school, for instance; how

faithful and true to detail, but how ignoble and even revolting it often is in its choice of incident. Thank heaven, our own Sir David Wilkie did not offend in this respect; for although, like Burns, it was the *humour* of the poor he mostly dwelt upon, still it was always done so as to excite the spectator's sympathy. We have, however, a very fair and pleasing specimen of the Dutch school in No. 305, Great Room, by Josef Israel, La Hague, "Age and Infancy," representing an old grandfather amusing a little child with toy soldiers. The child's face and cap agreeably relieve the sombre texture of the picture.

We now turn to two examples of Erskine Nicol. The first is No. 408, South Octagon, "His Ba'bees." To some lovers of art, no doubt, this picture has great attractions, for the face and figure of the miserly old man drawing his money out of his pocket is painted with wonderful vigour and expression; but for us, if we cannot sympathise with the living subject, no more can we with its delineation on canvas. From such a scene of sordid avarice we simply turn with cold repulsion. No. 263, Great Room, by the same artist, is a more pleasing subject, "A Country Booking Office." The old woman in the foreground is capital. One is sorry for that old woman, comfortably clad as she is, with shawl topping the old frieze cloak, well shod, and well happed. Still one feels the over-reaching carman is too much for her; and the gravely meditative eye, as she pulls the money out of her pocket, tells us, as plainly as it can speak, that the hard-earned money she is about to waste upon that haggling carman is the fruit of many pinching economies. The eyes of the pretty Irish maiden standing beside them tell the same tale; and so do the downcast looks of the rosy car-boy. We sympathise with the good old soul much more than with her large-jawed husband, who, speechless with indignation, turns his heavy eye to the overreaching knave. There are several good groups in this picture, painted in with much quiet and truthful humour.

No. 469, South Octagon, "Judith," by J. M. Portaels, is a fine female figure, with deep devotional feeling expressed in the uplifted eyes and parted lips, as she is about to enter the tent of the sleeping Holofernes; but this is the one sentiment expressed, there is no outward indication of the murderous intent within, either in face

or attitude. It is self-immolation, not assassination, that animates her, and, therefore, to us the picture fails to convey the full meaning of the scene.

Let us close our present notice by drawing attention to two examples that hang in close proximity in the Great Room. No. 326, by W. G. Orchardson, "The Forest Pet," is open to much criticism. It presents, however, to our eye such a fanciful scene of sylvan innocence and sweetness in the female figure, in the tender green of the foliage, and in the light tawny coats of the timorous deer, that we involuntarily turn again and again to look at it. There is great delicacy and harmony in the conception and treatment; gentle deer, soft green herbage, and waving trees seem to be fit companions of that languid, white-robed girl, whose intelligence and fancy were never made to stray beyond. It is like a scene that the melancholy Jacques in the forest of Ardennes might have come upon.

No. 342, "To the fields I carried her milking pails," by John Pettie, has more colour, life, and motion. The two young lovers, pail in hand, coming through the corn-field, are very charming; the landscape is appropriate to the sentiment, and a very pretty picture is before us of pleasing scenery and sweet feeling. This must conclude our remarks for the present. Next month we intend to notice a few of the most prominent among our own artists.

M. E. T.

(*To be continued.*)

The Touch that Heals.

We stretch our fevered hand towards Thee, Lord,
For Thou art near, and Thy own gracious word
Invites our touch;
Wounded we've been, where we had thought to win,
Poisoned with whisper'd doubt, and stained with sin,—
Thou healest such!

Nor healing only, strength we also need,
O Fount of Life! for this Thy gift we plead,
This water pure;
Here let us drink, and forthwith we may go
Quickened to bear the cross, to quell the foe,
And aye endure.

We bless Thee, Lord, for access to Thy side,
Here we unveil the grief or care we hide
From other's ken,
Assurèd of Thy sympathy so sweet,
Since Thou hast trod *our* path with bruisèd feet,
Thou Friend of men!

O wondrous Love! and yet we've doubted Thee,
Earth's mists had veiled our eyes, we could not see
Thy glorious light,
But now, O Star of Morn! we own Thy ray,
Be Thou our Guide until we reach the day
Which has no night.

FRUCARA.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

Molly Dent; or, A Little Child shall lead them.
Edinburgh: Maclaren & Macniven, 1872.

THIS little book is the simple record of the outer and inner life of a poor washerwoman; the story, freshly and graphically told, with not infrequent touches of quaint humour mingling with its deeper and more pathetic interest, of how a nature, energetic, active, helpful, and kindly always, but with a weary restlessness within, came, through the simple words of a little child, to have at last, underlying and consecrating all its energies, the "great fundamental Rest."

It is a book we can heartily recommend to our readers, especially to those of them who may have an opportunity of reading or giving it to women of the class to which Molly herself belonged.

Milla Torres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER VI.

"THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT."

"NANCY, dear," said Alaster, going up to her as she came into the room, "I find I have a message to do, I must leave you early this morning."

"Why, Alaster, you said just ten minutes ago, that you had the whole forenoon to yourself, and that you would come and fish in the Eachig. What's come over you now?" said Nancy, pretending to pout. "I don't believe a bit in your message."

"Nay, Nancy dear, I really have a message that must be done; you cannot think, my darling, that I would leave you otherwise," he added gently. He spoke so gravely that Nancy looked up in surprise, and was still more astonished when she detected the glitter of something suspiciously like a tear on his dark eyelashes.

"Goodbye, my pet, I must be off," he said, suddenly catching her to his breast and holding her tightly there for a moment, then releasing her, he instantly left the room, and before she had time to recover from her surprise, she saw him cantering quickly down the avenue. Constitutionally shy of any display of strong feeling in the presence of a third party, it was very rare for Alaster to be thus demonstrative when Barbara was present, and Nancy felt at once that something more was meant than a usual parting of a few hours. She turned to Barbara,—

"What can be the matter with Alaster?" she said, "I never saw him like that before. I do believe he was crying. Can there be anything wrong? Can he be ill, do you think, Barbara?" she added, anxiously.

"Nonsense, dear, what a foolish, anxious, little goosie you are when Alaster's concerned," said her sister, forcing herself to appear at ease. "Is it such a very unnatural thing for a lover to kiss his lady, and to be sorry to say goodbye, when he expected to have had a long, happy forenoon with her?" Nancy smiled.

"It is uncommon for Alaster though; I never remember his looking like that before."

"Hoots, lassie, love comes in fits and starts, does it not, like an intermittant fever? He's got the hot fit on him

now, that's all." Nancy laughed, but she evidently did not feel quite easy.

"Did he say anything to you about this mysterious message of his?" she asked.

"He said it was due to his allegiance to go."

"Oh, then, it must be about the Prince. I wonder if he's found out that he was here; how funny he must have thought it, that we didn't tell him, if he has."

"Now that he has gone, I must go and redeem my character with Elspet," said Barbara, rising.

"Oh yes, indeed you had better! Wasn't I near letting out about the Prince telling you what she said, Barbara?"

But Barbara was already out of the room. Self-possessed as she was, it was more than she could bear, to carry on that conversation with her young sister,—so happy and unconscious, with such a gulf of misery yawning at her feet. For Barbara well knew the perils of the enterprise on which Alaster had embarked—perils of all kinds, from friends as well as foes, by land and by sea. In their hurried interview, she had had no opportunity even to put him on his guard against some of the dangers which her acquaintance with the locality of the Reefer's Rock, and with the entrance to the cave suggested to her own mind; and, now that he was gone and beyond her reach, she felt as if, should evil happen to him, she would be little short of his murderer. She did not go to old Elspet as she had said. She felt as if it were utterly beyond her power to talk to the old woman about the ordinary household matters; so, instead of going to the kitchen, she turned abruptly out at the back door, and, half running till she was beyond sight of the windows, she wandered down the burn's side till she came to a bit of soft heather, under the shelter of a great rock close to the water's edge, which had always been her place of retreat and refuge in her childish troubles. Even Nancy did not know of this sanctum of her sister's, for Barbara's was one of those natures at once proud and sensitive, which have always great difficulty in laying bare any sorrow that strikes deep, even to their nearest and dearest. Every childish grief of Nancy's had always found a sympathising comforter in her elder sister, but Barbara had never sought for such sympathy in return; and the little heathery spot beneath the rock had been the scene of many a burst of passionate childish sorrow which had never been poured into human ear. One comforter she had often found,

however. Old Oscar, the big Newfoundland, had one day long ago tracked his child mistress to her retreat, and the loving, uncomprehending sympathy of his great brown eyes raised to her face, and his caressing tongue licking away her tears, had melted her reserve; and, throwing her arms round his rough neck and burying her face in his curly hair, she had wept her fill. Ever after, when Barbara was missing, Oscar had tracked her to her hiding place, and many a tale of sorrow she had poured into his sympathising, though uncomprehending heart, and felt as if she had found a friend. To-day, as usual, when she reached her retreat, she curled herself up on the little soft spot of heather, and lay quite still. It was another lovely autumn day, with the sunlight glittering on the water, and the little burnie singing its cheery song, and the breeze just moving the many-tinted leaves of the birch trees, but Barbara's heart was too full for her to see or to hear any of the sweet sights or sounds around her. At first, she lay almost as if she had been stunned by some heavy blow, and thought itself seemed paralyzed. By degrees, however, the sense of anguish returned, and she pictured to herself, as in a horrible night-mare, all the perils of the enterprise on which she had sent her sister's lover. The watching "bloodhounds" of which old Lauchlan had spoken, the terrible precipice of the Reefer's Crag, the narrow entrance to the cave, guarded by three desperate men, who in all probability might mistake their deliverer for an enemy, and destroy at once his life and their own last chance of safety. Then she pictured Nancy's despair when the news should come of her lover's death, and she almost seemed to hear the muffled tramp of feet, carrying some unsightly thing, covered with a white cloth, up the avenue. Then she thought of her young sister's long blighted life when Alaster should be gone, and that it was *she* who had sent him on the fatal mission, and wondered if *this* was what old Elspet's dream could mean. It never seemed to occur to her mind, rendered morbid by her terrible sense of responsibility, that there was a possibility of Alaster's mission coming to other than a disastrous conclusion; nor did the thought of her father's danger more than cross her mind; her whole soul seemed absorbed in the idea that her sister's lover had gone out to certain death, and that it was *she* who had sent him. How long she lay there she never knew, but by and by the idea began to

come to her dimly, that she must get up and go home, that Nancy would be missing her, and perhaps be frightened, and the old motherly feeling came to her again, that whatever happened. Nancy must not be alarmed. So she rose from her bed on the soft heather, holding on for a minute by the rocks, for her limbs seemed to refuse to bear her weight, and making a strong effort to steady her whirling brain, she set out to walk slowly homewards. As she entered the court. she was met by old Elspet, who, astonished at her long absence, had come out to look for her.

"Aweel, Miss Barbara," began the old woman, "as I was saying to Miss Nancy, the Prince is a braw gentleman, but gin *ye've* gotten ye'r head turned neist,—but what's wrang wi' ye, hinny," she added suddenly, struck with Barbara's colourless cheeks and faltering step.

"Oh, Elspet," moaned the girl, tottering forward a few steps, and almost falling into her old nurse's arms, "I *must* tell some one, or my heart will break."

"Hinny, hinny, what is it, what's gane wrang wi' my ain lassie? eh but it maun be a sair dule that gars *ye* greet that gate," said the old woman, for Barbara's tears were now falling fast.

"Come into the kitchen, Elspet, and I will tell you; but where is Nancy? she mustn't know."

"Miss Nancy's gane down to the Eachig. She left word as how she wasna going to lose her fish for denner for ony of Maister Alaster's freaks. She's ta'en the rod wi' her."

"Thank God." murmured Barbara, "then she suspects nothing." The old woman's face grew suddenly pale.

"Then it's aboot Maister Alaster that ye're wae, Miss Barbara?"

"Hush, Elspet, we may be overheard here. I will tell you all in the kitchen," said the girl, moving with steps that still tottered to the back door. Elspet followed her into the great, clean, old-fashioned kitchen, and sitting down with her on the broad window ledge, and leaning her tired head on her old nurse's shoulder, Barbara told her the startling events of the morning. Old Elspet listened silently throughout, only now and then stroking tenderly the girl's bright hair. and when she had finished her story, she only shook her gray head sadly, and muttered,—"It's the beginning o' the shadow, it's the beginning o' the shadow."

CHAPTER VII.

"THE BEGINNING OF THE SHADOW."

EVER afterwards, that bright September day lived in Barbara Forbes' memory as a hideous nightmare. How she lived through its long torturing hours she never could recall; and yet many trifling incidents in its course remained in her mind long after, as if they had been burned into the very centre of her being. She remembered, as distinctly as if it had been yesterday, how the shadow of the witch-elm before the window grew longer and longer in the afternoon sunlight, and how, always as it lengthened, old Elspet's words kept ringing in her ears, "It's the beginning of the shadow, it's the beginning of the shadow." She spent all the long hours of that afternoon alone, for Nancy had met Lady Macdonald and a gay party of visitors from Carrick Castle on a fishing expedition like herself, and they had persuaded her to join their impromptu pic-nic, and sent down a little bare-legged highland boy to beg Barbara also to join the party. An unspeakable feeling of relief came into Barbara's heart as she heard that her sister would not return that night, for, brave as she was, she felt that her self-control was hardly sufficient to sustain itself even in solitute, and she had looked forward with absolute terror to having to face her sister, and still keep her terrible secret. She sent the boy back to the pic-nic party to say that she was delighted that Nancy should go for the night to Carrick Castle, but that she herself must remain at home, as she had some writing to do for her father, which must be dispatched by to-morrow's coach. She was thankful, too, that she had an excuse that sounded so plausible, and, sick and dizzy as she was, she sat down to write the copy of some letters which her father had desired to be sent to the Royalist party in Edinburgh. She remembered to her dying day how the letters seemed to swim before her as she wrote; but having made the excuse, she was too conscientious to allow it to prove a mere excuse, and she struggled on bravely till the last line was written, and the packet neatly made up and sealed, and consigned to old Elspet's hands to be despatched by the early coach the following morning. Her conscientiousness, painful as it was, was of service to her, for it helped to pass a

couple of those torturing hours which must pass e'er she could have news of Alaster's fate. Old Elspet came and looked into the room several times while she was writing, with a wistful face, but she always went away again silently. Somehow there was something that overawed her in the intense feeling in her young mistress' white face, and the nervous fingers still resolutely doing their appointed work. When it was done, and the packet fairly sealed and delivered, Barbara rose from her desk, and tottered, rather than walked, to the sofa, and sank down upon it utterly exhausted. Oscar crept quietly up beside her, and laid his rough head lovingly against her cheek, and there she lay in a state of half unconsciousness, she knew not how long. Suddenly she came to herself with a great start. The autumn twilight had deepened into night as she lay there, and now the red harvest moon was shining full into the room through the unshuttered windows. Surely there was a dark figure standing in its light between her and the window. She started to her feet. 'Barbara,' said the figure, drawing towards her. She knew the voice in a moment, and stretching her arms towards him with a great cry, she would have fallen to the ground, had not Alaster Macdonald caught her in his arms. The sudden relief from the fearful tension of the last twelve hours had been too much for her, and for the first time in her life she had fainted. Very gently and tenderly Alaster carried her back to the sofa. For a moment he was frightened, and half laid his hand on the bell to ring for assistance, but, ignorant of Nancy's absence from Milla Forres, and of old Elspet's knowledge of his late dangerous errand, and fearing to alarm the first, and enlighten the second, he resolved to do the best he could for Barbara without alarming the household. He was, however, somewhat puzzled how to proceed in the novel circumstances in which he found himself. He remembered to have heard legends of buckets of cold water used on similar emergencies, but one glance at the pale, sweet face lying in the moonlight, effectually dissipated that idea, and he resolved to try gentler remedies. So he undid the fastenings of the window behind the sofa, and let the cool autumn breeze blow over the insensible girl, and quietly stood by waiting for the result. Very lovely Barbara looked lying there, with a stray ray of moonlight lighting up as with a glory her pale noble face, and bathing

in soft radiance the outline of her slender form. And in the midst of his anxiety, an involuntary thrill of admiration at once at her beauty and her bravery shot through Alaster's mind. In the midst of the engrossing excitement of his own share of the adventures and perils of that eventful day, and in his intense anxiety for the safety of the Prince, and fear lest his enterprise should become known to Nancy, and cause her alarm—the thought of Barbara and her share of the pain had never crossed his mind; and now, when he saw the revulsion of those long torturing hours of anxiety on the pale, motionless face before him, his heart began to reproach him for what he considered his selfish thoughtlessness of her suffering, and with his self-reproach, there came wonder and admiration at the girl's brave self-control. In a few minutes the cool breeze began to revive Barbara. She half opened her eyes, then shut them again with an uneasy motion.

"Barbara, dear," he said, taking her hand.

"Oh, let me sleep, let me sleep," she moaned. "let me sleep, or I shall die; oh I have killed him, I have killed him, what will become of Nancy."

"Killed who, Barbara?" he asked gently; "all is well, nobody is killed."

"Oh yes," she moaned, "I've killed Alaster, he's gone to the Reefer's Rock. Oh Nancy, Nancy!"

"No, no, dear Barbara, Alaster is here by your side, all is well."

"Alaster here!" she exclaimed, struggling up to a sitting posture. "Do not deceive me, is not Alaster dead? did he not fall from the Reefer's Rock? Oh, have pity, and tell me quick; this suspense will kill me."

"Dear Barbara," he said, drawing her towards him, "I am Alaster, all is well; the Prince is safe in hiding, and your father has gone with Lord Pitsligo to——."

"Is it indeed you, Alaster? Oh, thank God! Poor Nancy," and she hid her face on his shoulder, and burst into tears.

What was it in that last speech that sent a twinge through Alaster's heart? He hardly knew himself, and he did not give himself time to think about it; yet the ungrateful twinge was there.

"Does Nancy know?" he asked.

"No, poor child; thank God she has gone to Carrick Castle. I think it would have killed her if she had known,

Alaster. I know the suspense nearly killed me; and what was my anxiety to what hers would have been?"

Again that inexplicable twinge in Alaster's heart. What could it mean?

"I had to tell Elspet," she added. "I should have died if I had told no one, Alaster; but you know she can be trusted. But now, tell me all about it. Where is the Prince, and how did you get here?"

"The Prince is on board a vessel in the Firth. But I had better tell you all the day's adventures from the beginning. After leaving Milla Forres, I rode as fast as I could towards Rosehearty, for I felt sure that if Old Lauchlan's warning were true, it was there I should get news of the 'blood-hounds.' I got there about twelve o'clock."

"Twelve o'clock! why it was half-past nine when you left here, and it's at least forty miles to Rosehearty."

"Yes, but Nero can do a good morning's work when she's put on her mettle, you know, and certainly I tried her mettle this morning. Well, I was afraid to take Nero into Rosehearty, she showed such evident signs of hard riding, that I feared it might arouse suspicion if I rode her into the town, so I halted at Braco. You know Walter Gordon is a staunch Jacobite, so I thought I might trust him, and indeed I could hardly avoid doing so, even had I wished it, for it was absolutely necessary that I should have a boat ready, in case of finding that Old Lauchland's warning was well founded; so I told Gordon the whole story, and he gladly promised to let Nero stand in his stable, and to have his fishing boat ready to row me to the Reefer's Rock in half-an-hour, So, having put my disordered dress in order, that no one might suspect the hurried journey I had made, I sauntered down to Rosehearty, and into the bar of the Pitsligo Arms. Old Johnny Troup was standing at the bar, and I began a crack with him about the herring fishing. etc. By-and-bye I brought round the conversation to the prosperity of his inn, and the number of visitors in Rosehearty at present.

"Ou aye," he said, "the inn was doin' nae that ill. Pitsligo hissell sleepit here the nicht afore last, an' a gran' 'moussu' o' a flunkey he had wi' him that he had broucht straight ower frae France, that couldna ask civilly for a bit herring, but ca'd the bonny fish jist out o' the water 'poison,' the ill tongued villain, warse luck to him; an' last nicht there war three grand gentlemen frae England,

that speirt a wheen o' questions aboot Lord Pitsligo, an' whaur he went till, whan he leeved here, an' gin he had ony freens wi' him? There's naething like they Englishers for curiosity. They askit some questions aboot the whereabouts o' the Reefer's Rock tae, an' they gied Tibby Johnston's laddie half-a-crown no half-an-hour syne, for just showing them the road till't. Hech sirs! but they're flush o' cash, they Englishers.'

"I thought I had got as much out of Johnny Troup as I wanted then, so I paid for my glass of beer, and pretended to saunder away as in lifferently as I could, but I can tell you my heart was beating hard; that half-hour's start might have lost all. As soon as I was clear of the town I ran as hard as I could to the beach below Braco, and found Gordon and his boat waiting for me, as he had promised. I got in, and we rowed with all our might round the headland to the bottom of the Reefer's Rock. As we passed the last promontory, we saw three horsemen riding straight to the top of the cliff. In a moment I knew that the Prince's safety depended on whether they or I first got to the cave. When we reached the foot of the rock, there was nowhere to moor the boat,—the waves dashed to the very foot of the precipice. 'You must take care of the boat, Gordon,' I said, 'while I climb the rock.' He called out,—'Macdonald, you are mad, you must be weary of your life.' But I jumped into the water, and swam to the foot of the cliff. I had almost given it up then, in despair, the precipice seemed actually to hang over me, and there seemed no foothold even for a wild goat; but, just as I was nearly despairing, the wind blew almost against my hand a long tendril of ivy which had got detached from the rock. I seized it, and swung myself up by its aid to a projecting ledge." He paused a moment, then went on, "It was an awful climb, that next half-hour's, but, thank God, I did it, and I was in time."

"But the entrance of the cave; how did you get through that? I feared they would take you for a spy," said Barbara."

"So they did at first, but Lord Pitsligo knew my voice, and the Prince trusted himself to me."

Alaster would not tell Colonel Forbes' daughter how nearly her father had embrued his hands in his blood.

"He is a Prince worth fighting for," he added, kindling as he remembered the Chevalier's cool courage in the awful

[illegible] they made together, "He followed me down the [illegible] Rock as coolly as if it had been his palace stair-case. Gordon had succeeded in mooring the boat, and we got into her at once. Just as we had begun to row, we saw the three horsemen looking down over the top of the cliff, but we kept under the cliff out of sight till we had rounded the headland, and then rowed out to sea, where, as good luck would have it, a Dutch barque was lying at anchor, and its captain gladly consented to take one John Brown, a herring merchant, bound for Amsterdam, on some business negociations, on board. So we left the Prince there, and Gordon and I rowed back to Braco. I was anxious about your father, now that I had got the Prince off my hands, so I hung about Rosehearty till my friend Johnny Troup came up with the news that Lord Pitsligo and 'ane Colonel Forbes had just ridden up to Auchiris.' Then I mounted Nero again, and here I am, safe and sound, to tell my own tale."

"Thank God!" murmured Barbara. "Now Alaster," she said, rising, "you and I both need some supper, and Kepet will get your bed ready; you must not think of going further to-night."

JEANIE MORISON.

To be Continued.

The Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy

FOR 1873.

(SECOND NOTICE.)

BEFORE examining some of the more prominent of the landscapes of our Scottish artists, we have to remark upon one or two pictures of a different class. And first upon our list is No. 204, Great Room, "Christ and the Sleeping Disciples," by Sir Noel Paton. The artist has seized upon the moment when "Christ cometh and findeth the disciples sleeping,"—"What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" By the heavy frown on Peter's brow, and the rigidity of his attitude, the artist plainly intimates that Peter sleeps against his will, and almost hears these reproachful words. Christ, with bent head and clasped hands, stands to the left of the disciples. His face is in deep shadow,—it is of the colour of death, and we are

made to feel that, with none to help or to save, without even the sympathy of those for whom He trod the wine-press alone, He is about to enter that dark and dreadful valley, utterly companionless. This, no doubt, is the feeling the artist intends to convey. We question much, however, if this is an age in which such a subject and such a feeling can be adequately dealt with, and we do not unjustly disparage Sir Noel Paton when we assert that with all his fine imaginations, he has failed to give us an adequate idea of Christ, the divine Saviour of mankind. Those were days of deepest reverence, of burning faith, in which Leonardo da Vinci painted his "Last Supper," and Guido his "Ecce Homo;" and all artistic power is but the expression of the strongest feeling of the age. The embodiment of religious faith and burning zeal does not belong to the nineteenth century; our modern artist does but give us a tame and conventional copy of the grand realisation of the old masters. The draperies in this picture are well arranged, and the colours rich, but subdued. The grouping of the disciples is well managed. The distance is faulty, and the trees curiously inclined to grow sideways, to allow, we suppose, of the very faint streaks of dawn falling effectively upon the faces of the disciples, leaving Christ in shadow. In the distance Judas is dimly seen leading the soldiers who are to take Christ into captivity.

In Mr Paul Chalmers, we have an ardent disciple of the Dutch school of painting, He is almost Rembrandtesque in his skilful use of light and shade. In No. 194, the "Knitter," the face of the old woman knitting by the window, is thrown into relief by the semi-obscurity which reigns over the surrounding details, and the patient old face is the sole object of interest to the spectator. The best specimen in the rooms of this style of art, is a picture we have already alluded to, No. 305—"Age and Infancy," by Josef Israels, a foreign artist. In this picture, although the attention is skilfully brought to bear upon the face of the old man and that of the little child, by the chiaro-obscuro that reigns through the apartment, still, a large brown smear is not all that we have for background every detail being worked in with great fidelity and minute attention to the actual accessories of the humble life we are surveying. We consider that a very excellent example of this style of painting is to be seen in No. 616—"She works, and thinks of days gone by," by

Joseph Farquharson. A lonely old woman is pursuing her daily avocation. The sensitive and meditative face, telling of a well-spent life in the past, is the great point of interest in this very clever picture; but all the necessary accessories of her daily life are well brought in, and painted with sufficient care to interest us, without distracting our attention from the sentiment of the picture, which is that of a lonely and solitary old age, with no appliances or comforts to soften the rugged ending of a life of toil, and yet possessing a life within, strong enough to repel the benumbing influence of the cold neglect of the life without. It is curious to observe how, year after year, the same idea is embodied by our artists at the same period of time. We have in this year's exhibition more than half a dozen examples of lonely old age, and not least interesting among them, is No. 415—"A Lonely Life," by Mr Hugh Cameron, in which the same idea, under somewhat different treatment, is brought out of patient, solitary old age. In this picture, an old woman, loaded with faggots for her fire, is opening the door of her cottage. The sun is setting over a fading landscape, night is closing in, and darkness is about to fall not only upon the aged life, but upon nature also, to rise again when the appointed hour arrives. This is the most suggestive of all the examples Mr Hugh Cameron has given us of his fine and delicate feeling for true art. No. 301—"Going to the Well," is charming in sentiment, and the figures of mother and child are full of sweet simplicity; but the field they are walking through, and the pretty landscape around them, is slurred over with inartistic carelessness. No. 515—"Thrift," a little girl at work, is, as far as the manipulation is concerned, the finest example this artist has given us. The face of the child is beautifully painted, and full of expression; which cannot be said of No. 370,—"The Camellia," which, however exquisitely finished, lacks vigour of expression—the young lady looking down at the camellia in her hand, is utterly devoid of any expression whatever. No. 39, North Octagon—"Rummaging," is a fine and delicate bit of colour. There is also a portrait from Mr Cameron's hand—No. 224, "Hermann," which, for vivacity of expression and softness of touch, is admirable. To return, however, to Mr Paul Chalmers, we have to remark of this artist, that his portrait of Mr James Kirkwood, No. 241, Great Room, stands pre-eminent among the more than average excellent examples

of portraiture that we have this year upon the walls. Portrait painting is a branch of art that requires not only close and subtle observation of the character and habits of mind of the individual, but also the artistic acumen to present this character and these habits to the eye of the friend or the spectator in their best possible aspect; the man himself must be there, but it should be the man when he is *most himself*,—in his highest mood, and his most fortunate aspect. If the artist succeeds in doing this, and without too much idealising and improving of nature, we are satisfied. Such a portrait painter is evidently Mr Paul Chalmers. We have here this old divine sitting at rest after his many labours. How strongly painted is the venerable head and face; and the calm attitude and clasped hands tell us he has now arrived at that age in which rest is to be taken. This very fine portrait is an example of vigour and force of expression superior to any in the rooms, which, nevertheless, are full of excellent portraits, too numerous to mention here; for whether it is that Scottish physiognomy is, generally speaking, strongly marked and individual in expression, so that there is strong individualism to seize upon,—possibly the peculiar nationality favouring both sitter and artist—certain it is, that we see more powerful and vigorous portraits from Scottish artists, and of Scotch people, than are to be seen elsewhere.

No. 427—"The Late Colonel Sykes," by Mr James Archer, although somewhat hard in outline, is extremely vigorous and truthful.

No. 430—"Sir Alexander Anderson," by Mr George Reid, is a very characteristic portrait.

No. 262—"The Rev. Robert Buchanan," by Mr Norman Macbeth, is an example of careful finish, and studied attention to every detail of face and figure.

We have excellent examples of vigorous painting and sharpness of handling, from Mr Barclay, too numerous to mention.

In Mr Swinton's style of portrait-painting, we have quite different treatment. He has excessive softness and delicacy of touch, and manages to bring out an effect very striking as well as pleasing. No. 328—"Lady Elizabeth Pringle," and No. 59—"Portrait of Mr Davidson," are capital examples of Mr Swinton's softness and delicacy of manipulation.

We have scarcely left ourselves space to glance at one

or two more of the figure pictures, before we proceed to the landscapes and water-colours.

No. 356—"Interview between Jeanie and Effie Deans," by Mr Herdman, is not so good a specimen of this artist's work as could be desired. There is no individualism, either national or personal, by which we could recognise Scott's brave-hearted heroine, and her sister Effie is here quite a fine lady. She is also somewhat out of drawing, and the texture of her gown is far from satisfactory. All the painful accessories of prison life are here put in, and the best figure in the picture is the sympathising, if rugged jailer, looking on in silence at the distressing meeting between the two unhappy girls.

Something of the same fault-finding might apply to Mr Gibb in regard to his historical picture of "Marmion," No. 379. It is, however, powerfully painted, and the figure of the old monk supporting Marmion is the best in the picture. Mr Gavin, evidently the painter of mulatto life, has only one example, No. 480—"Oh! carry me back to Old Virginie." A dark-eyed mulatto is singing this melody to two young mulatto girls. The one smiles with pleasure as the well-known air swells through her ears; the other is overcome with melancholy regrets at the forced exile from her native land; thus bringing out the truth that different temperaments are variously affected by the same influences, according to the associating and latent ideas that are called into activity.

Mr Lockhart has two noticeable figures of Spanish life. No. 31—"A Spanish Gipsy" playing the guitar, is a very forcibly drawn figure. The black-eyed smiling girl stands out from the canvas with all the incisiveness of a daguerreotype. No. 546—"Anita—A Spanish girl in humble life," is real and life-like.

We should have noticed also, but can do no more than enumerate, several splendid little gems of art scattered through the rooms, that would repay hours of study and attention. Such as No. 317—"Dead Game," by John Faed, the best example of this kind of study in the rooms; and also 539, by the same artist, "Scene from the Gentle Shepherd," which, in point of brilliancy of colour and delicacy of finish, is worthy of his talented brother. No. 198, by Mr John Houston, "The Reveillé," a splendid bit of colour; No. 214—"Asleep," by Joseph Farquharson; No. 215—"Poverty," a beautiful example of fine work, by Joaquin Candrea; No. 434—"Keekie Bo," a promising

sketch from a young artist, Mr Robert Sanderson; No. 624—"Alice Lee," by Mrs Charretie, a most pleasingly drawn female figure; No. 596—"A Plea for Ragged Schools," by W. Macduff; and many others too numerous to mention.

We must now devote the space left to us to some of the capital examples of Scottish landscape. Mr Waller Paton this year exhibits certain aspects of nature with which we are not at all acquainted, and in which we find it difficult to believe. No. 107—"Entrance to Cuiraing, Skye," is, perhaps, the strangest picture in the Exhibition. There is a wonderful scenic effect in the way the blocks are pitched; here and there and everywhere enormous peaks, huge boulders that appear about to tumble head foremost below, pools of water, driftings from the sea, lying in all sorts of diverging places; interminable rocks, pools, and boulders,—and then out beyond, the open sea, lit up with a purple glory from the illuminated sky, that sheds around and over all this strange scene an irradiation of pink and purple colour, that makes it look like enchanted ground—like a sudden plunge into the wonderful cave in the "Arabian Nights." We should like to believe in this world of strange appearances, but we find it impossible. We pass on to No. 350—"Holy Island, from Penlester Glen, Arran." Here, again, in spite of our admiration for the beautiful foreground, with all its variegated and elaborate detail of cottages and corn fields, of wooded stream and beautiful waving trees, we look across the open sea at Holy Island, rising up from its depths, which we expect to see clothed in deep purples and sombre greens, and we cannot understand or believe in the pink and violet hues in which Holy Island presents itself. A bright afternoon sun is shining over all, and casting brilliant lights and deep shadows, and this we have seen, but not in such strangely coloured hues as are here depicted. No. 553—"Seafield, Fife," is still more distasteful to us. Mr W. Paton is, in sentiment and work, one of our finest landscape painters. We regret our own disappointment in the examples in this year's Exhibition.

In No. 333—"Threave Castle," we have Sir George Harvey's only landscape. It is a very pretty scene, painted in our President's usual manner,—limped translucent water in the foreground, with nice reflections of a genial yeasty tinted sky; a lonely tower rising up from a

mossy bank; rising ground to the right, and dipping down into the water; a mass of light foliage—somewhat confused in its proximity to a large tree, gratefully reflected in the cool stream below; a somewhat muscular angler is throwing a fly in the water, too smooth and glassy, we should suppose, for successful sport.

Mr Paul Chalmers has, in No. 500—"The End of the Harvest," a much admired scene of autumn twilight. The setting sun has all but disappeared behind some distant elms, and in the distance, the smoke of burning stubble ascends. In the foreground is an extensive potato patch, with an old man and girl busily filling up the last bag with potatoes. The setting sun glints the top of some potato bags already filled, but the semi-obscurity in which the large brown foreground is lying, prevents distinguishability of objects. This is a most masterly painting, although, on close inspection, the touch seems coarse and rough, at the proper distance the effects are magical. The spectator's attention is not arrested by the beauty of the scene, but by the masterly and powerful expression of a certain aspect of nature.

Close beside, and somewhat overpowered by its proximity, is Mr Bough's "Western Shore of Iona," 496. There are points of great beauty in this picture. Nothing could be finer than the soft rolling clouds lying low in the west, or the splash of the water on the rocks in the middle distance. The sky is particularly fine, covered with clouds tinted by the setting sun, it has that uncertain look so frequent in our variable climate. A flock of gulls to the left is settling down in search of food. In the distance, stretches, as far as eye can reach, the open sea, on which the light beautifully falls. Immediately to our left are rocks sloping down to a field, with cattle and sheep. In No. 405, South Octagon, we have a bit of Mr Bough's favourite "Borrowdale, Cumberland." We have here nature in her sweetest aspect, and one of Mr Bough's happiest effects of a summer sun shining through the dispersing clouds, bringing into luminous clearness in the middle distance a cornfield in all its mellow richness, and lighting up the distant hills. To the front, a green lane comes winding down from among the hills, along which a horseman leading cattle is slowly advancing. The hills to the left of the picture are thickly wooded and full of exquisite beauty, a winding stream occupies the right. It is just such a scene as it makes one happy to look upon. We love our

country lanes and hedges, and we know the fresh green herbage; these changing clouds and breaking lights are not to be found elsewhere. The manipulation of this painting reminds us somewhat of Mr M'Culloch's earlier pictures. There is also in No. 193, Great Room—"The Quhair and the Tweed at Innerleithen," a painting of Mr Bough's, but its somewhat chalky reflections and extreme brightness of colour make it a less pleasing picture than either of those we have mentioned.

We now pass on to Mr Cassie, who has five or six specimens in his usual manner—No. 240—"Barnbougle—Sun rising through Mist," is somewhat cold in treatment; it is, however, a pleasing picture. No. 352, although barren of subject, is a very charming effect of "Sunrise—looking out to Sea." The gentle swell of the waves is very happily given, and the rising of the sun is bright and cheering, without being exaggerated. Nos. 550 and 620 are two very pretty pictures of sea and shore under different aspects.

Mr E. T. Crawford has some delightful sea views. In No. 226, Great Room—"Sloop and Brig aground at low water," we have finely painted ships, and such perfect naturalness of grouping, and of tone and composition, that it reminds one forcibly of some of the best examples of the Dutch school. Indeed, we do not hesitate to say that this admirably painted little scene might easily pass for an example of Wouverman's. There is not a better thing in its way in the Exhibition. No. 217—"Boat Shore, Cockenzie," has a charmingly breezy look about it, and No. 313 is an example of still rougher water. No. 442. "Coast scene—Morning," is also a charming example of Mr Crawford's careful manipulation and faithful delineation of nature.

Mr John Nisbett has one or two clever sea pieces, witness No. 343—"North Berwick from the East Links." No. 394—"Out into the west as the sun went down," and No. 391, "Ground Swell near Dunbar." Though necessarily leaving unnoticed a number of charming landscapes, we must look, in passing, at Mr John Smart's fine picture of a "Summer Spate," No. 153. This is a picture that will repay a long inspection. The middle distance is particularly fine, and the rush of water from the summer spate in the foreground, is painted with great force and vigour.

We must now turn for a few moments to the water-colours in the North Room, and here again we have some

admirable examples of Mr Smart's skill in this delicate branch of art. No. 863—"Ben Venue," with cattle in the foreground, is a powerfully painted picture. In 929—"A Highland Homestead," we have a truthful delineation of the scene represented; the cattle are excellent. Mr Smart has several other examples in the water-colour room, all equally worthy of notice.

Mr Waller Paton is most charming in No. 1003, 977, and in 906, with its fine transparency of water. One could almost wish he would confine himself to this lovely branch of art.

Mr Arthur Perigal, has been in Venice, and has brought us back many characteristic views. However hard and oblivious of atmosphere he may be in his oil paintings, he is always charming in water colours, and has in Nos. 1023, 1093, 1110, brought Venice to us in all its clearness of atmosphere.

Mr Bough has a fine effect of "Moonlight" in No. 1051, "A Derelict Ship," and an old familiar scene in No. 1074, "Canty Bay."

Mr Nimmo has three miniatures on ivory of exceeding softness and delicacy. This artist seems to emulate the old masters in his lovely flesh tints and fineness of work.

Leaving unnoticed, for want of space, Mr Ballantines charming picture, No. 872—"Biding his time," and others of great beauty, from well-known names, we will look for a moment at some very promising examples from our younger artists, whose career we watch with great interest, as destined to fill up the gap that the future will inevitably make in the number of those at present in the van.

No. 897—"The Cuiraing, Isle of Skye," by John T. Reid, bought by the Association, is, we take it, a true transcript of nature, and is pleasantly and artistically dealt with. The scene, though strange, is faithful to nature, and there are touches of true artistic skill throughout the picture, holding out much promise for the future. No. 909—"Edinburgh, from Jacob's Ladder," the twilight hour stealing over the grey old town, is also a faithful picture, although perhaps not a pleasing one. Two other landscapes, by the same artist, deserve notice, namely, Nos. 826 and 864.

Mr George Manson has, in No. 1015—"The Fountain Well," an admirable bit of life, charming in colour.

Mr John Blair, a very young artist, has a remarkable specimen of still life in No. 986; and No. 926, by the same

artist, is wonderfully like in touch to one of Birkett Foster's light and feathery effects.

Among the ladies' names, we notice many of our old favourites. Miss MacWhirter has, in No. 1058—"The Apothecary's Shop," a clever scene of still life. Miss Bouvier, in No. 861—"The Spelling Lesson" gives us a charming little scene. Miss Jessie Kier contributes some fine sketches from nature; and the Misses Crichton some delicate flower studies.

We also notice several new names among the lady contributors, to whom we wish every success to which their evident progress in this peculiarly feminine branch of art entitles them.

M. E. T.

"In the Evening it is cut Down."

I.

A WALK in the sweet fresh country,
Up hills that are foreign land,
And, departing, I leave behind me
One kiss on a dying hand.
The dying pale hand that is trying,
As I go on my lonely way
To wave a farewell from the window,
Fond words that it cannot say.
Oh, dear dying hand! when, next summer,
The flowers are beginning to grow;
Will they open their eyes to the grass-land,
When thou art lying below?

II.

The days become shorter than ever;
I must hasten to catch the breeze
That blows on the mountains crisply,
And freshens the dusty trees.
I must hasten to get up my strength
For another long night of un-sleep,
When the stars seem for ever and ever
Their weariless vigil to keep.
I must hasten back to my love,

To tell him the view I have seen
From the height of these grand old mountains,
Up high where he hath not been.
I must gather some mountain roses,
Soft scented with summer rain,
And lay them by him on the pillow
Who longs so to see them again.
I must tell him, oh! many a story
Of the birds and the wild sea foam
That dashes its kisses for ever
On the edge of its rocky home.

III.

And so I trudge on, ever wishing
I was back by my darling's side,
In the hush of the twilight window,
Where wandering rosebuds hide.
I grudge every moment that passes
Away from that window, and yet,
My heart is unconsciously longing
To see the great golden sun set.
Ah me! if my darling could witness
Once more, with his dying eyes,
This glorious radiant picture,
Like a vision of Paradise;
I think in the far dim future,
When we meet on a sunny hill,
He would tell me he had remembered
The sight of its glory still.

IV.

I stand on a bold hill-shoulder;
The sea-waves are dashing below
In the light of a ruddy sunset,
Like wreaths of crimson snow.
Far down in the nether valley,
I can see the smoke arise
From the tiny little cottage
Wherein my darling lies.
As I linger, the sound of voices,—
Voices soothing and clear,
Come stealing up the mountain path,
And this is the song I hear:—

"D'où venez vous
Enfant très-cher
Des cieux qui sont bleus
Des cieux qui sont clairs?"

2d Voice.

"Je ne sais pas, mignonne,
Les cieux d'où je viens
De la Main de Jésus
Dont tout je tiens."

1st Voice.

"Où vous en allez-vous
Enfant très-cher
A la Grand' Rue
Enfant très-cher?"

2d Voice.

"Oui petite mignonne
A la Grande Rue
Dans laquelle on voit
Le Palais de Dieu."

But the voices grow distant and faint,
With the breath of the fitful air;
Though now and again as I linger
And listen patiently there,
In a wayward and tender softness
Of that dying western breeze,
The words are wafted distinctly
From under the linden-trees.

1st Voice.

"Mon âme est isolée,
Enfant très-cher,
Et déjà épuisée,
Et moi, je suis bien triste,
Enfant très-cher."

2d Voice.

"Mignonne, bien-aimée,
Dans nos tristes temps
Nous sommes isolées
Au sérieux;

Mais, je vous en prie,
Tenez-vous en à Dieu
Car il veut bien
Nous soigner tous
Pourquoi s'inquiéter
Pauvre malheureuse?
N'attendons-nous pas tous
Le Réveil de Dieu."

v.

The sun dips into the waves,
And I turn away from the sea,
And hurry again down the hill
To one who is waiting for me.

In the hush of the twilight window,
Where wandering rosebuds hide,
Where angels are gathering closer,
Kneel by his lonely bedside.
He tells me he has been dreaming,
A dream of another land,
Where they were waiting in silence
That glittering angel-band.
He tells me he is so happy,
So peaceful, so loved, so forgiven,
And only waiting in patience
For Jesus to take him to heaven.
So I treasure my little stories,
To tell him another day,
When he will playfully ask me
For what I have got to say.
Meanwhile, in the musical twilight,
I sing him softly to sleep,
While the stars seem for ever and ever
Their weariless vigil to keep.
Singing, ah! singing softly
To his dying, listening ears
A hymn that shall sound for ever
In the lonely future years.
Listening for every sigh
Of the languid and failing breath
Till my voice wails out in the silence—
The awful silence of death.

. . . .

VI.

A dreary voyage before me
Over the foreign wave,
And, departing, I leave behind me
Sad tears on a foreign grave.

Is there more to be told you?
More that will interest any
In the tale of a darkened existence,
The sorrow of one out of many?
Ah, no! for the world has not power,
Or leisure, or love apart
From its busy self-occupation,
To comfort a broken heart!
As a dream it will come again,
It will come to me once more,
The view from the sunny hill-tops,
The waves on the wild sea-shore;
The hush of the rosebud window,
The kiss on the dying hand,
The walk in the blooming country,
Up hills that are foreign land.
Oh God! if I could but forget it,
If only the dream could be,
Swallowed up in a dream for ever,
As waves die into the sea!

Do we pine for the sunny high-road
That has found us in storm and rain?
Or long for flowery thickets
That bloom in a weary plain?
Ah, no! we can bear with sorrow
Where joy is a thing unknown;
But sorrow is tenfold sadder
Out of which joy hath grown.
And, growing, hath fled for ever,
Leaving, with many a dart,
The ghost of a cruel remembrance
To rankle the bleeding heart.
But the *sin* of earth will seem darker,
And her *sorrows* easy and few,
When the crimson day shall dawn at last,
At the glad "Réveil de Dieu!"

NAOMI S. SMITH.

A Walk in the Town of a Woman from the Country.

THE question was started at a dinner table where I had once the privilege of meeting Dr Hanna and Mr George Macdonald, why the genius developed in the London atmosphere was so seldom *native* genius; why men and women, whose names emerged from the crowd of London, so generally belonged to those who had settled in London after having passed their childhood elsewhere?

I hazarded the remark, that the reason might be that the powerful compressing force of the sense of loneliness in a crowd, was more felt by the stranger in London than by one who had his family associations there, and that the influence of such loneliness was more quickening than the direct influence of the advantages to be found in that centre of civilization. I spoke from my own experience,—an experience, indeed, "as moonlight unto sunshine," in comparison with that through which the stranger in London must pass; yet, though different in degree, alike in kind, for I have passed a wandering life and a solitary life, and, even in a well-known city, have "known the heart of the stranger."

Very different in degree, yet alike in kind, to the walk of a stranger in London, is a walk I almost daily take,—down the Lothian Road in Edinburgh.

The current of life is far from being dense in that locality, yet, passing through it day after day, without a point of living contact with any of its component individuals, save such as springs from a common humanity, I find it dense enough to force my soul into yearnings else unknown, into depths of fear, and up to heights of faith, of which I else had never been free.

I will give three of the sights which thrilled me there, and the thoughts that thence arose.

About the hour that men go to their offices, I walked down the length of that dirty road behind two gentlemen. I saw the face of only one of these every now and then, as he turned to speak to his companion. It was a florid face, with stubby grey whiskers. The dry business man was written in every lineamnet.

I wondered *how* dry, and was occupied in speculations, as to what there might be left of the dreams of youth still smouldering beneath that dry-as-dust exterior, when a

little in advance, a group attracted my notice. It was the not unusual group of a young man standing looking at a young woman. He was a lad of about twenty years of age, tall, lanky, sandy-haired, loose-jointed. His face was freckled, his eyebrows were almost imperceptible from their whiteness. He looked like a lad from the country on the look-out for work in the town. So much for the material form, but the lad's soul was in his face. The expression of that face was as a glory. Endymion before Diana might thus have looked, I thought, when he did

> "Count and count
> The moments, by some greedy help that seemed
> A second self, that each might be redeemed
> And plundered of its load of blessedness,"

and then I glanced at the object of that rapt adoring gaze. A snub-nosed, red-cheeked, cross face, full of an habitual discontent, crowned with a dirty bonnet and a heap of tawdry, dirty flowers— a maid-of-all-work out of place— not of the self-denying, unselfish, womanly divine type, which, thank God, is still not uncommon amongst us but a girl essentially self-seeking and fusionless, who would make a husband's home as dirty and comfortless as a den could be.

Oh! man's amazing power of idealizing love! Oh! poor poet youth, how will you stand the waking? Even as this wonder, swift as wind, passed through my mind, I caught the face of my business man turned to look upon the sight, and upon that face which I had set down as hard and dry, shone "the tender grace of a day that was dead." Nothing could surpass the depth of its expression of mingled love and pity, as again and again he turned to look at the entranced boy.

Passing on and musing upon what I had seen, I remembered a sight I had met on that very road a few days before.

A woman was approaching me, carrying a ragged whining baby on one arm. The other arm was raised and bent across her face, which was completely hidden behind it. Just as she neared me, a woman who was walking in front of me suddenly seized that arm and dragged it aside, with an exclamation of "Eh, Maggie!" The face thus suddenly shown was such that I involuntarily stood still and gazed at it. It was the handsome face of a woman about two or three and twenty, dark eyes,

masses of rough dark hair, and such a look upon the face as I never saw before, and hope I may never see again. *Expression* it could not be called, for expression implies the use of a medium,—and the naked agonized soul itself seemed there, inarticulate, terrible, ashamed, proud, enraged, broken, loving, hating,—a woman trod upon, struck, reviled by the man for whom she would have died, by the man for whom she had lost her womanhood; nothing short of that supremest horror could be present there. By our common heart of womanhood I knew it. It was but for an instant that the look which mortal eyes should never look upon was seen by mine, for with a gesture not to be disobeyed, she pushed her friend aside, and again covering her face, went on her way—whither?

Her friend and I stood for a moment looking after her, then without a word went on our several ways.

I did not torture myself thereafter that I had been silent, for the bond of silence had been imperatively laid on me by natural instinct. No money, no human sympathy, could have touched that soul. It was wrestling with its God, with a God that showed Himself to her as froward, hateful, and hating, yet evermore to be adored.

Thence my mind drifted as to what might be the end of the boy's idealizing love. He never could pass through that woman's fiery torture. His passions never could rise to the strain of that wrestling. Her nature's intensity was not his, but his catastrophe, if he wins his heart's desire, and gets his wished-for bride, will, in its different way, be equally terrible. Mrs Browning sings,—

"I love love, truth's no cleaner thing than love."

I more than endorse that sentiment. To my mind, truth's no *other* thing than love. I have faith in love's insight. In that girl, who, to my unloving eyes, looked so unattractive, he saw, I doubt not, a deeper truth than I had eyes to see. He saw "a daughter of the gods divinely fair," and a daughter of God in Christ, God himself has called her. Such my creed holds her to be—such his love sufficed to see her; but alas! for the trial of his faith. How will he emerge on the other side of the cruelly prosaic hours, and days, and years?

Will he keep a poet's yearning, and lose the man's tenderness, and harden into the sneer of the cynic? Will he keep the human heart, and lose the ideal vision, and degenerate into the beast's satisfaction with the thing

that is? Will he, in his love for the person, give up one after another, all desires for attributes beyond that person's attained level? Better the last alternative than the first,—better a beast than a devil; but neither a goal to which he now looks, neither a state to which his soul rightfully belongs. My heart felt profoundly sad, for it seemed to me that all intense natures stood in dread danger of one or the other loss. How few have the power to love their chosen to the end, and yet to hold fast their lofty ideal! Into my sadness welled up the recollection of a third sight.

It was of a tiny coffin I had once seen in a room where I visited. Just a fortnight before I saw it, I had got the bed coverings out of pawn, and had put some coals into the empty grate, and had done what little I could to help the family in the dire trial of a father out of work. Now, the mother, pale from childbed pangs, sat upon a bed from which, as one glance sufficed to show me, the coverings had again disappeared. They had gone, I felt sure, to pay for the little coffin before me, which, studded thickly with brass nails, and with a shining new plate, with the babe's name inscribed upon it, looked so strangely in contrast with the surrounding squalor. The poor, worn-out mother had many little lives tugging with all their varied needs upon her inadequate strength,—yet she looked heart-broken on the coffin of the little one so lately given, for so short a time known, so soon taken away. Father and mother both must have consented to the sacrifices involved in paying for that adorned little coffin. Their money was not thrown away. For one thing, it rendered to me a measure full, pressed down, and running over, for everything they had ever accepted at my hands. It showed me the divine human heart yearning over the helpless babe. It enabled me, in the midst of a fool's destructions, to hide my head in the folds of a Father's garments, and to find joy and comfort in the words that best express our human state, which at its best is altogether vanity,—"Naked we came into the world, and naked we go out of it."

Yes, the naked helplessness of the babe is its strongest hold upon the parent's tenderness,—a strength perfected in weakness. The naked helplessness of the dead is our strongest hold upon the Divine tenderness. Let us lay hold upon God's strength to make peace with Him.

Broken, and scattered, and dust-begrimed fragments at

the best, oh, Father! are all that remain of thine abundant gifts when we have eaten of them, but Thou wilt give commandment to gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. X. H.

Early Experiences of an Author.

FROM my earliest childhood I was fond of writing. My favourite lesson time was that allotted to composition, when I gave my young imagination full play, and took myself and my governess into flights which bewildered both of us.

I wrote thrilling epitaphs on tombstones (composed of paper pasted on a board), erected over the graves of my pet dogs and chickens who died natural deaths,—recording in melting terms the principal incidents of their lives, and the faithful record of their last moments; but, unfortunately, the rain in a few days obliterated their memory, and posterity is thus deprived of a valuable addition to literature. My fondest day-dream was to see a story of my composition in print, and I thought that Byron, of whose poetry I was then enthusiastically fond, had never penned truer lines than these,—

> "'Tis pleasant sure, to see one's name in print,
> A book's a book, although there's nothing in't."

My day-dream at length formed itself into a resolution to launch my little craft upon the ocean; it might come back to me, or it might not,—at any rate, I would chance it. I took heart of grace, remembering with becoming modesty,—considering the difference between us,—that Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre" had been rejected by a dozen publishers before it found a purchaser, and that Milton's "Paradise Lost" was sold for either five or ten pounds. Accordingly, when I was about seventeen years of age, I wrote a short story, called "His Life and Mine." How carefully I hid my manuscript in the sacred precinct of my own room; for I had heard that geniuses, as a rule, were never appreciated in their own families, and remarks had come to my ears of the "waste of time and paper," which cruelly crushed the rising hopes of my young breast. Some day I would show them that my time and paper had not been wasted; in the meanwhile, as it was merely

the pencilled copy I was finishing, I need not have hid its existence so carefully, for I defy any of my relations to have deciphered it, except with the most extreme difficulty, in which case the game would have been hardly worth the candle.

I made one exception in favour of my pet sister, whom I took into my confidence; and at all times she was called on to be my audience, to admire my plot, appreciate my genius, and——correct my grammar.

The only point on which we were at variance was when my voice beginning to shake as the tale waxed most pathetic, I handed her the manuscript to read till I had recovered my composure. She could not understand how I could shed tears over a thing of my own creation, and I maintained, and still maintain, that though it may have been a foolish, it was a most natural thing to do; the stories of others were just as fictitious as my own; we knew them to be all fanciful together, and if the one moved us to tears or laughter, why not the other? Many a day did she and I discuss the probability of the tale being accepted by the editor of a certain magazine (one rather obscure was chosen, as being more likely to be pleased with small things); we made rough copies of the note which was to accompany it; we received with rapture the imaginary answer, and lived the rest of our days in the sunshine of prosperity, she sharing in the glory reflected from her sister's well-earned fame.

The good of mankind, the love of letters, the desire for applause, the love of fame,—these were the feelings which actuated authors, and these we thirsted for; but behind all, and I doubt, though I scarcely then confessed it to myself, *before* all, was an *arrière pensée* and keen hope of a golden profit which was to follow on the publication of this and similar stories, whereby I was to build up the fortunes of the family, and, in a melodramatic scene, to "heap coals of fire on the parental heads, in reward for their remarks on wasted time and paper, by throwing into their lap the sordid gain which was the result of my talent!"

How pleasant, how delicious the anticipation. Alas! how different the reality, for to this day I have never seen a penny!

At last a fair copy, accurately punctuated, was made, and a note carefully written accompanied it, setting forth that I hoped the editor would find it suitable, &c., &c., for

the pages of his magazine, and if not, begging for its return. I appended a romantic *nom de plume*, and with many fears and prayers sent out the craft which was to bring me back such a golden cargo.

I may mention, what I blush to think of, how I wrote my note on deep mourning paper, hoping this would induce the editor to suppose I was a struggling widow in reduced circumstances; or one of these marvellous orphans one meets in books! who nobly maintain their whole family by the workings of their brains, and so to render him more lenient in his judgment of my story.

Days, weeks elapsed, and no sign. Never did love-sick maiden watch the advent of the postman more eagerly than I did, and well did I understand the feeling, "that hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

Freely as we had spent the coming fortune in imagination, it is a consolation now to think that we did not take up any bills on the strength of its coming.

At last, one glorious summer day, when I was beginning to try and think no more about it, and to deem that it was lost for ever, I set off, accompanied by some English friends, to climb the highest peak of the Ochils.

Everything was bright and beautiful, no shadows were on the hills, and the valley lay sparkling in the sunshine; the air was exhilirating, and I came down from the clouds, which I considered was the proper abode for an author, and enjoyed myself with all the joyous *abandon* of seventeen. In the evening, we came home somewhat tired, but with spirits yet unexhausted, to the little watering place at which we were then residing, ready to do ample justice to an evening meal, and full of the happy day we had spent.

Scarcely had I passed the threshold, when a letter in an unknown hand was put into mine. This was *the* answer at last.

I was giddy from sudden excitement, and blind from suspense for a moment; then I tore it open, greedily devoured the contents, and saw that my story was ——accepted!

Never, no, never if I live to eighty, can I hope to experience such a moment of intense, intoxicating joy, as I did then; it was the acme of all my desires, and I was more than content. I could not speak, but, mutely enjoining silence, I placed the letter in my sister's hands, sure of a sympathising friend.

What to me were all the good things spread on the table? What the relation of our day's excursion and adventures, which one and all of the party were pouring forth at the same time? Up I went to the clouds again, and I hope my friends enjoyed my hazy talk when I did condescend to join in conversation. Poor mortals, what could they have in common with a British Author?

Several times during the evening, the letter, the precious letter, was drawn surreptitiously from my pocket and re-read, and I longed for the proud moment when the book would be placed in my hands, and I could judge for myself how well my words looked in print. I fancied myself carelessly placing it in my mother's hand, asking her to read that little paper and give me her opinion of it; and I went to bed well pleased with the world in general, and in a state of unmitigated satisfaction with myself.

How cold the morning light is! How it takes down a last night's rapture, and throws a less pleasing aspect over all our affairs! I was still much satisfied with my success, looked at the letter again, and almost blushed to find myself vaguely disappointed that there was no mention of remuneration.

I daresay that will come, I thought, I remembered having heard that often months elapsed before people were paid for their writings; it was sure to come sometime, and then what presents I should buy!

At length the magazine appeared. I nearly learned my story by rote, so often did I peruse it; indeed, when bound along with the other numbers of the year, so often was it looked at with fond affection, that to-day, if I take it in my hand, it falls apart at *my* page, and the gilding of the back is completely worn off.

Youthful enthusiasm having worn away, I have learned to estimate my story at what it is worth, and that is very very little (I don't mean in a pecuniary point of view, for that is simply nothing at all); but even in those days my pride got considerable blows from the frank criticism of my friends. My brother-in-law dubbed me "Battle, murder, and sudden death," from the sanguinary manner in which I despatched my characters; my brother, who in common with many men, thinks a woman is fit for nothing but mending stockings, and that if she has a mind, she should repress its workings, picked it to pieces in a merciless manner, assailing all its weak points; an old

friend of the family, who had himself published several volumes, to whose criticism I humbly submitted it, read it to the end without remark, and then coolly enquired—"What do you mean by this? 'His name being written in the book of immensity.' Where is this volume to be procured?" I gave him no response; in fact, I could not answer the question. When I wrote it, I thought it sounded grand and awful, and vague and mystical, and that my readers would lose their curiosity in the solemnity of such a majestic flight. But the climax was put to my feelings when I proudly read "His Life and Mine" to our old nurse, expecting that she would feel an honest pride in having had some share in the upbringing of such a prodigy, when at the close she solemnly shook her head, and exclaimed—"Eh! siccan a peety that you and Dickens hae nae morals!" That sweeping assertion made me stagger for a moment; let us hope she meant morals in the light of those which "adorn a tale." However, there was some slight compensation for the blow, in the fact of being classed with such a writer.

MARTYN HAY.

THE Annual Prize offered for the best prose article appearing in the February number of *The Attempt* has been gained this year by Lutea Reseda, for her article, "The Making of the Maker."

MEMBERS are reminded that their half-yearly Subscriptions fall due on Saturday, May 5th, and are referred to No. XI. of the Society's Laws.

A Letter on "Middlemarch."

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You have asked me to review *Middlemarch*. Under the best of circumstances, I should feel in relation to such a task as if I were a mouse set to review a city, and I am by no means circumstanced at the best just now,—for my time, my thoughts, and my pen are very fully occupied in other ways. You must forgive me, then, if instead of a review I send you only a very inefficient letter.

Middlemarch professes to be a study of provincial life in England, and as such, it gives us at least seventy characters all distinctly individual. This multiplicity of life is complained of by some who think that, as works of art, both this book and *Romola* would have been more perfect with a less lavish use of George Eliot's wonderful gift of drawing character. I cannot agree with this criticism, for, in the case of *Romola*, the complexity of individual lives which crowd the stage seems to me an essential part of the representation of the Florentine republican days; and in the same way, a study of provincial life necessitates the picturing of these numerous petty circles, all revolving round their different centres. The set over which the Chettams and the Brookes preside is entirely separate from the gaieties where Rosamond shines, and from the lower sphere where Bulstrode deals out "his beneficence at once ready and severe;" "ready to confer obligations, and severe in watching the results." The Garth and the Featherstone relationships have little in common with one another, or with the other circles named. Yet all these interests intersect one another, and are curiously and subtly interlinked. It would repay some trouble to trace the skill with which all this distinctness and interlinking is carried out.

Take, for example, the introduction of Lydgate on the scene, through the medical proclivities of Lady Chettam and Mrs Renfrew, and the easy speed with which, as if drawn by the eyes of a basilisk, we are, through Rosamond's silent wishes for a well-born suitor, brought along with poor Lydgate right into the heart of the Vincy family, and so on by natural steps into the Garth and Featherstone connexion.

How wittily we are made to feel the approach of the "high-coloured, dark-eyed," self-assertive, trenchant-

tongued Mrs Cadwallader, through the gossip of her maid, and the prophetic wincings of Mr Brooke! How cleverly Mr Brooke's "miscellaneous invitations," which "seemed to belong to that general laxity which came from his inordinate travel and habit of taking in too much in the form of ideas," are worked to bring together those who could meet only in such "fortuitous concourse." How strangely and significantly the mercurial-minded and steadfast-hearted Will Ladislaw is used by "sarcastic destiny" in that "stealthy convergence of human lots," in that "slow preparation of effects from one life on another, which tells like a calculated irony on the indifference or the frozen stare with which we look at our unintroduced neighbour."

It would be difficult to determine which of the studies of character is the most wonderful. Perhaps the character of Bulstrode is the masterpiece. It is painful, among such a large number of characters, to find no picture of a living goodness rooted in a distinctively Christian thought and feeling; and looking upon the book even as a work of art, I feel that the same remark applies to it which has been made of Miss Edgeworth's and of Dickens' writings. Such a lack in a work of art is a serious defect, for in so large a number it is unlikely that not one soul should be found honestly and distinctively Christian. It is intensely painful to find Bulstrode figuring as the sole representative of Christian profession, and it is both unjust and untrue to make such a man sole representative. At the same time, this character of Bulstrode is a very cunning work. Few readers can part with this man with their hearts softened by his wife's loyalty, and their eyes tearful, by reason of her "look up, Nicholas," without learning to be silent in judgment. "Some called him a Methodist, and others a hypocrite, according to the resources of their vocabulary." Lydgate, with a doctor's acumen, "formed an unfavourable opinion of the banker's constitution, and concluded that he had an eager inward life and little enjoyment of tangible things." A still deeper insight comes voicelessly with the charity not didactically inculcated, but livingly breathed into us by the same spirit, to which was due "the movement of new compassion and old tenderness, which went like a great wave" through that figure with the changed mourning dress, and the pale face with "the trembling about the mouth," at the sight of which Bul-

strode burst out crying. This is a charity we need not go far to learn, for, "thanks to the human heart, by which we live," a Mrs Bulstrode is not a rare phenomenon in her loyalty any more than in her "odd patch work of phrases and habits." Such conduct as hers would be possible to most women towards their nearest and dearest, and it only needs the help of a little social imagination to extend that possibility so as to embrace a wider surrounding. Mrs Bulstrode's manner of meeting life's crosses is far more common than Rosamond's entire selfishness. Every female character in the book is more frequently met with than such an instance as Rosamond is of an utterly heartless loveliness.

We have all known the sweet lady like Celia, with her nice manners and her ready blushes, her touch of *naïve* malice and self-satisfied, matter-of-fact common sense; her strong local proclivities and affectionate disposition, and incapability of passion; her clear sight of the immediate land and deadness to all aspiration; her "indirect mode of making her negative wisdom tell" upon beings of larger speculation; her small criticisms, and occasional awe of her deeper-natured sister.

Genial Mrs Vincy, with her good-humoured face, and Niobe throat, and flying pink ribands; the two Garths, mother and daughter, with their sterling qualities of head and heart; the dear old innocent triad of Mr Farebrother's drawing-room; Mrs Cadwallader, Lady Chettam, are all every-day characters. Dorothea even has her appearance at wide intervals in most large circles of acquaintance, but few could name a Rosamond, such as she appears on the morning of the threatened execution in the house. Short, however, of this extreme development of heartless selfishness, a woman like Rosamond, in many of her characteristics, is not difficult to find. The combination is not uncommon, of great gentleness of manner and lovely fragility of appearance, with a mulish obstinacy and a persistent clinging to small purposes, like that of a snake's clinging to the ground when it is entering a hole,—a clinging so tenacious that a strong man may pull with all his might at the tail of the creature and yet be eluded.

Mr Brooke is so life-like, that we feel his character must have been drawn from life. We cannot help smiling at this worthy man, "nearly sixty, of acquiescent temper, miscellaneous opinions, and uncertain vote," who

"took in all the new ideas at one time," but saw that "human reason may carry you too far, over the hedge in fact," and "pulled up in time." His little peculiarities amuse us, whether he takes us "on a severe mental scamper," in a skipping and uncertain way, passing from one unfinished passage to another with a "yes now, but here," or whether his remarkably fluent pen runs off on its own account, and becomes an independent cause of events influencing many lives. Still, a student of George Eliot cannot but feel that here the writer has not had the same keen enjoyment of the sport as was evident in the characters of Mrs Poyser in *Adam Bede*, in that of Felix Holt's mother, and in the inimitable monkey of the Spanish Gipsy.

It would take too much space for me to enter into more of the characters in this book. I will pass on to consider the work in relation to its other professed aim. It professes to be the history of the blundering life of a cygnet, "reared uneasily among the ducklings in the brown pond," who "never found the living stream in fellowship with its own oary-footed kind;" of one who might have been a St Theresa, but who found for herself "no epic life wherein there was a constant unfolding of far resonant action," "only a life of mistakes, the offspring of a certain spiritual grandeur, ill matched with the meanness of opportunity." "With dim lights and tangled circumstances, she tried to shape her thought and deed in noble agreement; but after all, to common eyes, her struggles seemed mere inconsistency and formlessness." "Her ardour alternated between a vague ideal and the common yearning of womanhood; so that the one was condemned as extravagance, and the other condemned as a lapse."

George Eliot refers this failure of the later-born Theresa to their being "helped by no coherent social faith and order, which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul." She has, however, neither hope nor desire for the return of the past order—the medium in which Theresa's "ardent deeds took shape:" she believes it gone for ever. She wastes no sighs on that having passed away; she aims, obviously, at the desirability of a clearer and nobler social air; at a change in the conditions of society, and of education, especially of women. Her sarcasm is biting against "the plans of education, at once narrow and promiscuous,"

which make "woman's knowledge only another name for motley ignorance;" and against the low estimate of woman's relation to man, which so largely taints the wisdom of the nobler sex, and so often results in men's giving foolish answers, to their own destruction, when they are brought under the conditions of modern civilization to hear—

> "A subtler sphinx renew
> Riddles of death Thebes never knew."

The pictures given of this manly wisdom are not flattering, whether in the collective buzzing of admirers round Rosamond, whether jerked out in Mr Chicheley's ideal of a "blonde with a swan neck, and a certain gait," "with a little filigree about her," "something of the coquette, and a little of the devil," "who would make a dead set at a man;" whether seen in Lydgate's dreams, as he plays about the flower of Middlemarch, the woman "perfectly lovely and accomplished," "with a true melodic charm," "producing the effect of exquisite music," quite contrasted with that Miss Brooke, "who did not look at things from a proper feminine angle," and "whose society would be about as relaxing as going to teach the second form, instead of reclining in a paradise, with sweet laughs for bird notes, and blue eyes for a heaven;" or whether ponderously evident in Mr Casaubon, who considers the great charm of the sex to lie in its "capability of ardent, self-sacrificing affection," and in that capability, sees Dorothea's "fitness to round and complete his own existence." "He took a wife to adorn the remaining quadrant of his course, and to be a little moon which would cause hardly a calculable perturbation." Lydgate found a Rosamond, and Casaubon met a Dorothea, results how utterly perplexing and baffling to all preconceived ideas, readers of *Middlemarch* know.

Poor old Casaubon could see clearly the desirability of a worshipper for the author (*in posse*) of the Key to all Mythologies; but it never occurred to him that a worshipper infers and requires a glory correlative to the spirit she brings. "Providence in its kindness had provided him with the wife he needed." "Whether Providence had taken equal care of Miss Brooke, in presenting her with Mr Casaubon, was an idea which could hardly occur to him."

If the poor elderly creature could even have acted like a properly absorptive sponge in relation to Dorothea's

cravings to love and serve man, it would have kept her quiet. "With all her yearning to know what was afar from her, and to be widely benignant, she had ardour enough for what was near to have kissed Mr Casaubon's coat sleeve, or to have caressed his shoe latchet, if he would have made any other sign of acceptance than pronouncing her, with his unfailing propriety, to be of a most affectionate and truly feminine nature; indicating, at the same time, by politely reaching a chair for her, that he regarded these manifestations as rather crude and startling." He had no power to accept a helpmeet where he had only desired "the uncritical awe of an elegant-minded canary bird."

Great as is my admiration of the book, I feel a want in the writer's view, as great as in the state of society she condemns. What if Mr Casaubon had lived to a great age, as a white-moled shrivelled-up individual like him would have been likely to do? Is there no "lofty conception of the world, which might frankly include the parish of Tipton," poor old Casaubon, and all, and Dorothea's rule of conduct there?

Assuredly there is none which would allow of a true full development of Dorothea's faculties, which would give her a field for her own powers to expatiate in, or satisfy her hunger for intensity or greatness:—none.

But it seems to me that God very often so casts the human lot, that we cannot walk in accordance with His high requirements without sinking our own wealth altogether; and our lives in such a case are a daily dying to self,—yet a daily living by faith, and a daily increase of our talents. To me, the study of such a creature as Dorothea would be far more satisfying, if a head as powerful and an insight as keen as George Eliot's were inspired by that fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom,—to show the drama of such a soul's unfolding, under the conditions given, of the utterly uncongenial marriage, and the utterly irresponsive neighbourhood. I thought at the beginning of the book that this was the writer's intention, as an art contrast to *Romola*. There seemed indications of such an intention in Dorothea's piteousness, when Will Ladislaw gave a pinch to annihilate the vaunted laboriousness of Mr Casaubon; in the "new alarm on her husband's behalf, which was the first stirring of a pitying tenderness fed by the realities of his lot, and not by her own dreams." "When she looked steadily at

her husband's failure, still more at his possible consciousness of failure, she seemed to be looking along the one track where duty became tenderness." This pity would only deepen under the pressure of the miserable impossibility of her fulfilling the doctor's prescription to amuse Mr Casaubon. This pity conquered in that struggle, so wondertully given in few but burning words, when Dorothea, chilled and repulsed by Mr Casaubon's unresponsive hardness, sat in the dazzling sun rays, and knew not whether the discomfort was not part of her inward misery; "and instead of tears, there came words."

"She began to hear herself, and was checked into stillness. Like one who has lost his way, and is weary, she sat and saw in one glance all the paths of her young hope which she should never find again. And just as clearly, in the miserable light, she saw her own and her husband's solitude. Now they walked apart, so that she was obliged to survey him. If he had drawn her towards him, she would never have surveyed him,—never have said "Is he worth living for?" but would have felt him simply a part of her own life. Now, she said bitterly,—"It is his fault, not mine." In the jar of her whole being, pity was overthrown. Was it her fault that she had believed in him,—had believed in his worthiness? And what exactly was he? She was able enough to estimate him,—she, who waited on his glances with trembling, and shut her best soul in prison, paying it only hidden visits, that she might be petty enough to please him. In such a crisis as this, some women begin to hate." But with Dorothea the resolved submission came, and in her first meeting with her husband thereafter, she felt something like the thankfulness that might well up in us if we had narrowly escaped hurting a lame creature.

Such a beginning might have resulted, in George Eliot's wonderful hands, in a study at once unique, profound, and ennobling, of a soul great enough "to find in loss a gain to match," and of a character notably imperfect of its kind, though of a kind greater than those around her, being perfected through the allowing "patience to have her perfect work;" perfected not indeed in the accomplishment of any long recognisable deed, but in the full rounding of a noble soul capable of the divine. Certainly, such a life and such a study would be intensely painful, but it would be a pain of which the fire would shed a true

and steady light. This, however, would require a principle which George Eliot's fatalism steadily ignores.

Perhaps George Eliot has found reason to think that no woman could stand a long and protracted strain like this, that no woman could thus enlarge her own stature, unsupported by man, that woman's perfecting must come through her personal satisfaction in love; and without the realized nearness of God in the man Christ Jesus, I too think that no woman could do as I have spoken of.

The chief interest and value of the book lies in its fulfilment of an aim which, though not professed, must still, I think, have been the leading one in the writer's mind. This book seems to me to be a study of the value of woman in the social order, and of her true worth in relation to man. This value is not only greater, but it is quite other than that which is assigned to our sex by clever young men like Lydgate, and elderly sages like Casaubon.

I have just been reading a pamphlet called "Why women cannot be turned into men." If you are not already acquainted with it, it is a pamphlet worth your reading. It is very unsparing in its admission of woman's inferiority to man in every manual employment. It points out that "women have never brought themselves into true relation with nature," and that they lack ingenuity, inventiveness, and exactness in all their doings. I thoroughly endorse all that is said. There is nothing of the work which falls to our share, from scrubbing a floor to embroidery, from cooking a potato to playing on the piano, which a man cannot do better than a woman can. I not only endorse all this, but I go beyond the admissions of the pamphlet. Not only in relation to nature, and in all mental processes which require strict and accurate reasoning, and long tension of the attentive faculties, but also in gentleness, patience, and tenderness, I believe that men excel women,—for these qualities, so often supposed to be especially ours, are all of them qualities which belong to the magnaminous, which belong to strength. They are qualities which are developed in men in proportion to their strength and maturity of development, and when developed, are to the like in women "as sunshine is to moonshine, as is to water wine." Nothing is more ruthless than youth. Tenderness belongs to God. Pity's divine yearning is best seen in the face of man,—for in man, and not in woman, was God incarnate.

But we have our value. The pamphlet to which I have already alluded, speaks of women's value in their indirect "harmonizing and advancing of material progress," through their stimulation of the promotion of luxuries; and of their value in quickening moral progress, "through the appeal of their helplessness to man's strength, bringing out the noblest and finest parts of his nature."

Woman's value lies in the line indicated, but it stretches far beyond these limits. Woman is essentially a requirer. The true woman is a requirer at man's hands *of his own ideal.* In the true woman extremes meet; the negative requirement passes into the positive fire of judgment.

To refer again to the same pamphlet, woman's intellect has been always developed, not like man's, in relation to nature, but in relation to man. She studies the man "with an interest that he need not devote to her." "From motives both of love and fear, she absorbs herself intently in another's life and nature, setting his wants, desires, and antipathies before her own, and considering everything in relation to him."

Studying thus the man, she comes into relation with the *personal God.* She brings forth the Son of God.

When Christ appeared, womanhood, as a whole, received the Ideal Man, though man rejected the Incarnate God. Though Satan moved one woman to sift the unstable Peter, we can say that no woman was ever found against the Christ.

Women have from the beginning been exercised not only in relation to man, but also in relation to especial men. "Women are intensely personal and special in their interests." "They devote their attention chiefly to studying in the individual what distinguishes him from his fellows."

Noble women are requirers not only of the ideal, but of personal ideals. As long, however, as they are only such requirers, they are a terror to men. Men hate George Eliot's Romolas and Dorotheas. They would like to obliterate such women if they could; unless here one, and there another feels the hope that he could, in honesty of purpose and reality of personal aspiration, desire the contact with their flame, and that he could so inspire such a woman's heart with personal love, that the fire of her requirement would be beneficent and unconsuming as the light of day. Noble women are requirers not only of the ideal, but of personal ideals; but such

women end in reaching the goal of utter failure and entire bitterness, unless their love of the attribute is united with the love of the personality of some one man. They must learn to require their ideals not from, but for those they love, else the falsehood of their extreme will have results more disastrous than those which wait upon the women who are ready to sink all desire for ennobling attributes in their touching faithfulness, (like that of the dog), to the personality of lover and husband. The type of womanhood which has too slight a hold of the ideal gives us daily revelations of pure, unfailing, domestic tenderness, refreshes men with a thousand droppings of the dew from heaven. Such women's placid souls "can accept momentous doctrines without any eccentric agitation," yet they fail to satisfy man's immortal yearnings. Men know their worth, but they hanker after "Fifines at the Fair." Men love them as Fred Vincy loved his easy-going mother, but their spirits are neither refined nor at rest in them.

In *Middlemarch* we have all this brought before us very vividly, with the vital exception of the Christ. The only woman who is throughout the book seen to be perfect in her kind, is Mary Garth. She loves Fred Vincy as he is. She would always have loved him and no other, even if he had turned out "a curate in debt for horse hire and cambric pocket handkerchiefs," but she loved him also as he ought to be, and never for a moment flinched from her requirement at his hands of his own better self. It was no transcendant requirement. It was simply the requirement of a clear-headed, good-hearted, sensible, moral woman, without a spark of genius, or any aspiration beyond the humble confines of the parish of Tipton. Mary Garth was perfect of her kind, but she was of a kind which belonged to a smaller sphere than the more finely touched spirit of Dorothea.

The difference between man and woman is wonderfully shown in the different results upon Lydgate and Dorothea in their trials. They both, under the influence of "that moral stupidity in which we are all born," had taken "the world as an udder to feed their supreme selves." Lydgate, with "the selfish unselfishness of man," again to quote Janus' pamphlet, "thinks of himself first, of his will and his aims; he thinks of the woman next, and how these may affect her. She is a part of himself, and the whole must have precedence over the part." Dorothea, with "woman's selfish unselfishness," from woman's "habit of

absorbing herself in the man, losing her identity in him, and living a kind of reflected life," thinks "of the man first," considers "his acts, his requirements, his wishes, before her own; but she considers him and all that is known to her of his life, his thoughts, his feelings, and his occupations, chiefly with reference to herself." * Both Lydgate and Dorothea make a fatal mistake. Lydgate found that a woman who is fit only for the hours of relaxation is truly a basil plant, "a plant which flourishes on a murdered man's brains." Dorothea, belonging to that sisterhood "whose great function is praise," who "enter into no contest, but infallibly adjudge the crown of contest," † found she had flung herself at the feet of a failure, at the feet of a man who was a failure not only to his own ideal, but to all truth of man's and woman's relationship, who dreamt, in his futile gropings, that he "could be helped effectively by a shadow, or worthily by a slave." ‡ Lydgate, with man's divine magnanimity, took up the burden of the helpless creature he had wooed and won, with man's divine conformity to the God in whose image man is made, became sacrificially involved in that creature's failure and low estate: all his high ideal was put aside to provide that bird with a gilded cage. His judgment never touched Rosamond. His bitterness, when it occasionally blazed, never scorched her. How could it? That fire of judgment burns not from without till it is kindled from within. The goats of the judgment day go not away into everlasting burnings until their own spirits are enlightened. The reasoning with them of the Judge precedes their obedience. They are obedient then, and only then, to the dread "Depart," when, by force of the awakened judgment within themselves, they go away, not "are cast," but "go away" into everlasting burnings.

On the other hand, Dorothea never for a moment let go of her requirement, of her demand for the ideal, and old Casaubon, failure though he was, was man enough to wince and quail at her slightest touch. He knew right well that it was a demand for *his own ideal.* He knew right well that the quick flame playing about him, of

* These quotations are all from the aforesaid pamphlet, "Why Women cannot be turned into Men," by a lady under the name of James, published by Blackwood.

† Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies.* ‡ *Ib*

that woman's unerring judgment, was a flame that might save him, "yet so as by fire."

Men as a rule look upon poor Casaubon with unfeigned sympathy and pity, and consider him a very ill-treated individual. "What right," I have heard them say, "had Dorothea to anything very remarkable in her husband? What was she herself? What could she do herself? Except picking out and altering designs for cottages, we never hear of any achievement of her own." A woman's rightful sphere, however, is not judged according to her achievements, but according to her requirement, and her power to help and to appreciate.

It is significant that Dorothea's and Rosamond's lives are brought into contact in connexion with Will Ladislaw. Dorothea and Rosamond are both of them of the class of women whose seeking is predominantly after some ideal which shall stand in true correlation with themselves. They both belong to a higher sphere than that in which they are placed; Rosamond to the higher scale of material surroundings, to the elegance and beauty of rank, and cultivation, and wealth; Dorothea to the community of the great in mind, to the goodly fellowship of the prophets, or the holy army of martyrs. They are as far apart as earth and heaven, yet the circle of both is concentric; and Dorothea's danger is as great as Rosamond's, of becoming a woman lost to womanhood, of hastening to her fall with "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation." Such women never let go their hold of their required ideal; but it is very possible that they may, in its pursuit, lose all hold of chastity, love, and truth. There is a terrible sisterhood, all alike armed with the sword of an unswerving requirement. Their manifestations are manifold and diverse, but the spirit that inspires them all is one. It is the awful requirement from below. If no personal love tempers their fire, they are all alike terrible, whether, as having conceived a high ideal, they search out, like flame, the weakness of every idol, and bring all the glory of man to the dust; or whether, as on their lowest plane, they take the hire of the insatiate. Happily for Dorothea, Will Ladislaw, knowing that she would value him at no more than a dirty feather, if she found him a paltry pretence, loved her, and desired her, and walked in the light of her requirement. And he found her richly capable of merging her whole life in his, satisfied to the full with

giving him wifely help, satisfied herself, whatever others said, to be known only in a certain circle, and only as his wife and the mother of his children.

Will Ladislaw and Fred Vincy were both of them, as men, immeasurably inferior to Lydgate; still, while Lydgate sorrowfully and bitterly failed, they both stood and prospered in their inward lives, because they both knew man's deepest secret—the true relationship between man and woman. To quote Ruskin again, they knew "that the buckling on of a knight's armour by his lady's hand was not a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It was the type of an eternal truth—that the soul's armour is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it; and it is only when she braces it loosely, that the honour of manhood fails."

Know you not those lovely lines—I would they were learned by all youthful ladies of England,—

> "Oh wasteful woman! she who may
> On her sweet self set her own price,
> Knowing he cannot choose but pay,
> How has she cheapened Paradise!
> How given for nought her priceless gift,
> How spoiled the bread and spill'd the wine,
> Which spent with due, respective thrift,
> Had made brutes men, and men divine."

Middlemarch calls to a nobler, higher view of the value of woman and the mystery of marriage, with a voice as earnest as life.

Would God that men and women both would lay its teachings to heart!

Now, sweet friend, I have, for the love of you, written this letter. Take it, then, as "affection's offering," and not as a literary attempt; for, as I have before said to you, my ambition, if I have any, is not literary. If I write at all, I write because pen and ink furnish, in my often wandering life, the only available outlet for a certain activity, and the only opening for the expression of certain truths, to the passionate love of which my soul has from my infancy been devoted.—Ever yours,

X. H.

Spring.

Welcome, rejoicing May, glad burst of spring,
Hasting in virgin green to clothe the trees:
Hail laughing sunshine, budding flowers, that fling
Sweet odours on the balmy western breeze.

Hail, promise-breathing hours, that bid the earth
Renew its youth, its unsoiled robes, awhile,—
Bid every grove to harmony give birth,
Bid moors with furze, and fields with daisies smile.

Sweet flowers, and sweeter sunshine, that unite
To deck all nature with delicious green,
Fresh foliage waving in the genial light,—
Charms ever new, though fourscore seasons seen!

For e'en the burdened human heart, that aches,
Feels a faint breath as of its youth again,
Answers the music of the birds, that wakes
In city grove as in unpeopled glen.

Why should spring pass? the tender green depart,
The woods grow silent, and the leaves grow sere?
Alas! the springtime fancies of the heart,
Why should they die, and leave it void and drear?

Why should the dreams, that spread a rosy light
O'er all things earthly, fade in gloom away?
Why should the hopes, that show the future bright,
Lie withered at our feet, as soon these leaves of May?

Life marches on: the glory of its morn
Changes to clouds, as sure as flowery spring
Gives place to autumn; and its visions, born
Of youth and sunshine, fleet on swiftest wing.

For life is not a song, a feast, a dance:
It is the allotted pathway of the soul,
Whose every step, as onward we advance,
Conducts us nearer to a changeless goal:

Whose sunshine and whose clouds are not in vain
If used aright,—alike in mercy given
For growth, for ripening,—'tis through joy and pain
God trains His wayward children up for heaven.

Wish not that dreams might last: the advancing day
Brings its own good, though dried the dews of prime.
Let the spring pass, the freshness wear away,—
So comes the year's fruition in its time.

Run on, ye months, and bring the richer flowers,
The glorious roses, and the glow of June,
The ripened fruits, the purpling grape, the crownëd hours
Of golden fields beneath the harvest moon.

Pass on, ye years, and though youth's dreams must die,
And life grow shaded, and the heart grow still,
Bring strengthened faith, the hopes that mount on high,
The love unselfish, and the chastened will;

The soul that craves not, but gives thanks for all;
The joy of faith that lives through changeful years;
The trust that wavers not, whate'er befall;
The wisdom that reaps fruit from smiles and tears;

Bring the deep peace, the heart returned to rest,
From idols weaned, its fevered wanderings o'er;
The calm through sufferings reached, the freedom of the breast
Whose all is God, whom self enthralls no more;

Bring, with life's fading glow, the unearthly light
That kindles more and more to perfect day;
Then bring the "end of faith," the vision bright
Where faith and hope shall melt, in bliss, away.

OMICRON.

Milla Torres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER VIII

"GOD'S HOLIDAY."

THE next morning was Sunday. It dawned one of those perfect days of early autumn that always remind one of old George Herbert's lines—

> "Sweet day—so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky;
> Soft dews shall weep thy fall to-night,
> For thou must die."

All nature seemed basking in a joyful Sabbath rest, as Barbara opened her window to let in the sweet morning air. It seemed to her as if the joyful Sabbath peace of the outer world were reflected in her own heart, everything there seemed so happy and at rest, and she looked back to the terrible yesterday as to some hideous nightmare already far away. She dressed quickly and went down to the hall. Her own happiness seemed to have reflected itself in her dress; somehow she felt as if on this day everything dark or dingy was out of place, and without thinking much about it, instinctively, as it were, she had turned away from the quiet coloured silk she generally wore at church, and chosen one of those brilliant muslins, covered with bright flowers and gay butterflies,—the delight of our grandmothers in their girlhood, and of which relics are handed down to us now, with the bright colours but little faded by the lapse of a century—so thoroughly did the dyer do his work in these days, ere this age of cheap tawdriness had begun. Very gay and pretty she looked with the many-coloured muslin, looped up with rose-coloured ribbon over a rose-coloured quilted petticoat, or kirtle, as they were called in those days, and a bow of rose-coloured ribbon in her bright hair. She entered the hall humming softly to herself the air of an old Gregorian chant. Alaster was standing by the window in the hall looking out, and he turned as she entered, and went forward to meet her, an involuntary look of admiration lighting up his dark brown eyes.

"Good morning!" he said, as he took her hand, smiling. "You don't look much the worse of yesterday's vigils."

"How could any one look ill on such a morning?" she answered, smiling. "Have you slept off your fatigues?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "I think I did a good day's work yesterday for king and country, so I consider that I am fairly entitled to rest and enjoy myself to-day; there's nothing makes one enjoy rest so much as the feeling that one has worked well for it."

"I think I am entitled to a rest to-day, too," said Barbara. "My yesterday's work was fatiguing, though only of the passive kind. What a comfort Sunday is," she added, dreamily.

"Yes," said Alaster, "if people would only believe that that is what it was given for, a day of rest, God's holiday to all mankind; but people will insist on distorting it according to their crooked ideas of what God's holiday *ought* to mean, instead of just taking it as it was given."

Barbara looked up with a quick astonished glance. "Dear me, Alaster," she said, "I didn't know you thought about these sort of things at all, I thought you only cared about shooting and fishing."

Alaster smiled. "I do care about shooting and fishing, certainly," he said, "but I hope, when my new sister comes to know me better, she will find I care about other things too."

"Oh, I am so glad," said Barbara, drawing a long breath of extreme satisfaction, "it is ever so much nicer, but I never met with any of the lairds that *did* care for anything else before, and I thought you would be the same, you know."

Alaster laughed. "You don't give the lairds a very high character, Barbara, but I am afraid there's a good deal of truth in it. But there's my yesterday's defender, your own kinsman, Lord Pitsligo, Barbara, surely he doesn't come into that category?"

"Oh no, he's the dearest old man, but he's an old man, and he's been abroad and knows Fénélon and all these people, but I never think of anybody being like him,—he's like the Apostle John, I think."

"Then there is one laird, it seems, in whose favour you make an exception; perhaps we should find some more if we tried. What say you to old Newhaugh, Barbara?" he added, smiling; "if wisdom lies in wigs, he should be a wise man, I'm sure."

Barbara only laughed and shook her head as she answered, "But really, I am so glad, Alaster, it will be

ever so much nicer for Nancy; and do you know I have often thought about what you said just now, that Sunday is really just God's holiday, and I said something about it to Elspet once, but she did'nt seem to like it, so I never spoke about it again. Come away to breakfast now," she added, as Elspet brought in the tray with hot scones, fresh-made butter, and new-laid eggs. "Will you go to church with me? it's a nice walk up the glen; and I was to meet Nancy there."

"Yes, by all means, the walk up the glen will be charming."

"The walk *down* again, you mean," said Barbara, laughing.

"Both," said Alaster, and the tone struck Barbara as graver than the occasion warranted.

Breakfast over, Barbara dressed quickly, and the two set out to walk to Carrick to the little chapel there. Like all the Forbeses, the Milla Forres family were Episcopalians, and the chapel at Carrick was their usual place of worship. Left very much to herself, however, in all her doings, Barbara had discovered for herself a little Presbyterian church, to which she sometimes went during the short winter days, when the walk to Carrick was too long. This was the only performance of her young mistress on which Elspet looked with disapproval. In her eyes it was quite a derogation from the dignity of "the family" that one of them should be seen in such an extremely plebean place as a "Scotch kirk," but on this point she had always found Barbara inexplicably obstinate. Attached as she was to her own form of worship, there was something that attracted Barbara strangely in the very simplicity and baldness of the Presbyterian worship, and in the simple, earnest words of the grey-haired old man who preached Sunday after Sunday to that little band of shepherds with tartan plaids, and old wives with white mutches. The curate who officiated at Carrick was a smart young Englishman, who evidently thought that it was a clear case of "casting pearls before swine," that *he* should have to minister to a small rural congregation in a little Highland village. Barbara met him sometimes at picnics or fishing parties in the neighbourhood, and his flippant manner, and evident self-conceit always jarred with her idea of what a minister of Christ ought to be. Brought up as she had been in a mountain solitude, with few opportunities of gaining any knowledge of the world

except from books, Barbara was an idealist of the purest type, and was probably inclined to exact from "poor human nature" an amount of perfection to which only rare exceptions to the general rule of poor humanity have the least chance of attaining, and too little inclined to make allowance for human frailty, especially when such frailty showed itself in connection with so high an office as that of a minister of Christ. Therefore, in all probability, the young curate, who was by no means a bad fellow at heart, though he had many crudenesses about him, got scant justice at her hands. The old Presbyterian minister, on the other hand, answered exactly to her ideal picture—venerable, benevolent, fatherly, always to be met with in the humblest cottages whenever there was sickness or sorrow there; speaking from Sunday to Sunday earnest, simple words of instruction and comfort to his simple flock; and with the added romance of having been himself, as a child, carried by his covenanting father and mother to hide in glens and caves in the old persecuting days, the old man had a strong attraction for Barbara; and when the time came for her first communion, and she had felt the impossibility of speaking of the doubts and fears that beset her to the smart, flippant Englishman, she had sought out the old minister, and got much fatherly advice and comfort from him, though she had never dreamt of deserting her own form of worship for his. This Sunday, however, she and Alaster were bound for the curate's chapel at Carrick. The path ran along the burn side. All nature seemed rejoicing that bright September morning, just as it had rejoiced yesterday, when Barbara sought her heathery refuge in her almost despair; but how different everything looked to her, now that the Sabbath peace around found its echo and reflection in her own breast!

The two walked along in silence for some time; somehow both of them felt too happy to care to talk much. All nature seemed dressing itself in its brightest to their young eyes, and neither of them cared to stop to analyse their happiness; it was *there*, and that was enough for them, they cared little whence it came. Probably, if you had asked them what made them so happy, both would have answered, "Who could be other than happy on such a day, after the troubles of yesterday?"

"Do you think it is very shocking to go to a Presby-

terian kirk sometimes, Alaster?" asked Barbara, at last breaking their long, happy silence.

"A Presbyterian kirk! What on earth would take you there?" said Alaster, looking up in astonishment. Barbara coloured and hesitated, and began to repent her unwary question, for her visits to the little kirk in the glen had been kept a profound secret from every one except Nancy and old Elspet.

"Oh, I thought—perhaps—you would understand," she said, hesitatingly, and blushing deeply.

"Understand what?" he said, smiling at her evident confusion.

"Understand that there may perhaps be good people who are not Episcopalians," she said, and taking courage, she added earnestly, "There's an old minister that preaches in the little kirk in Glen Finn, he's ever so much more like what, I think, the Apostles must have been, than that Mr Bennett, the curate at Carrick."

"How do you know that, you little heretic?" said Alaster, trying hard to keep his countenance, and look reproving; but Barbara caught the amused twinkle in his eyes, and laughed as she answered—

"How do I know it? because I sometimes go to hear him preach."

"Oh, you shocking renegade, so I have forced you to confess your guilty secret," laughed Alaster.

"No indeed, sir, I confessed it of my own free will; but seriously," she added, "is it so *very* shocking after all?"

"Shocking? I should think so. I'll tell the Bishop, and he'll have you excommunicated at once." Barbara laughed, much relieved that what she had always dreaded to confess should be received only with banter.

"I do so hate that Mr Bennett, at least, I suppose I mustn't say I hate *him*, but I hate his conceit and affectation; there can't be any harm in hating *that*, though if I hate that I don't see very well how I can help hating him, for that's pretty much all there is of him."

"See what comes of going to Presbyterian kirks," said Alaster, "why, you're full of 'envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness.'"

"That's not the fault of the Presbyterian kirk," laughed Barbara. "I'm always most charitably disposed when I'm there, it's the English curate that rouses my natural corruption; but Mr Mackay is such a dear old man, and he talks to the people as if he really had a message

of "good tidings" to them, and was glad to give it; not like that horrid Mr Bennett, who seems always as if he thought it was an honour to the Bible and Prayer book that he should condescend to read them, and quite an absurdity to talk to the country people as if they had souls at all; that surely isn't what Christ meant His ministers to be."

"Certainly not," said Alaster. "He who washed His disciples' feet, cited as one of the signs of His ministry that 'to the poor the gospel is preached.'"

Barbara's eyes brightened. "I wish you could hear old Mr Mackay, that is just the sort of thing he does," she said.

"We will go and hear him, then, if you like, next Sunday," he said.

"That will be delightful," she said; "I should so like to talk about his sermon with some one; but," she added, a shade coming over her face, "Nancy doesn't like the Presbyterian kirk. She says the service is so ugly; but I don't think it *is* ugly, though there's no organ, and no painted window, and the church is just white-washed, and the seats are of common, unpainted wood. I know it *ought* to be ugly, for there's nothing to make it pretty, but somehow it never seems so to me when I see the shepherds there with their tartan plaids, and their collie dogs lying under the seats, and the old wives with their white mutches, all listening so earnestly to what Mr Mackay is saying, and looking so, as if they believed every word; and then the singing, Nancy can't bear that, she says they sing through their noses, and all out of tune, and I'm afraid it's true, but somehow they seem to sing with their *hearts*, and I can't help liking it, though it *is* out of tune now and then."

"Aye," said Alaster, "heart music is better than organ music, and I've no doubt it gets sooner up to heaven, though, of course, it's highly desirable that, if possible, it should be in tune," he said, smiling.

By this time they had reached the gate of the lovely little chapel, lying nestling under great trees in the shadow of the mountains, and the soft strains of the organ, and the grand words of the *Te Deum* greeted them as they entered.

Brought back to Earth.

How well do I remember, in the happy days of yore,
I sought the trace of fairies oft on hill, and wood, and shore;
All story-laden, wishing so that I might see them play,
Then would they bear me off with them, for seven years and a day.
The time would seem a little hour, so much there was to see;
To watch how, in their sunless land, the roots of flower and tree
Were fed by tender fairy's hand, and colours shed on flowers,
And how the gems were chiselled out to grace their glowing bowers.
One bright eve, all my pulses leapt and throbbed with quickened beat,
As I saw a perfect fairy-ring before my wandering feet.
I was a child, a very child, and childlike I believed
(As is the nature of our soul ere it has been deceived)
These beautiful wild tales of elves and fairies, and their Queen,
And I knew not why it should not be as it before had been.
So with a childish struggle, and a quivering thought of home,
I thought how happy I should be awhile with them to roam,
And fairly overstepped the ring, and sat upon the ground,
With mind resolved, and beating heart, and eager glance around.

It was a fair and lovely spot, beneath a tall fir tree,
Where through the neighbouring branches glimpsed the blueness of the sea,
While weird-like evening breezes breathed amid their summits tall,
And uttered sounds that sometimes seemed to be a fairy-call.
The sun was waxing red and large, his rays were long and low,
And earnestly I marked his pace, that seemed but all too slow,
For I knew the fairies' trysting-time to be beneath the star—
Fair star of love, that followed him, and smiled on them afar;
For it was from her silvery fields that first they floated here,
And found our globe was not so fair, our people not so dear,
And therefore did they upwards steal, to look with loving eyes,
Hopeless of all returning where their saddened longings rise.

The sun sank down into the sea, its golden rim had gone,
The solemn time had almost come, they would be here anon.
I often turned and started, sure I heard them drawing near,
The slightest sound in nature rang so changed upon my ear; [grasp;
The primroses and violets fell crushed from my nerveless
My hands sought from each other strength in a prayer-like clasp; [vanished quite,
An awe crept o'er me from the shades; the gold had
I felt a fear I had not felt while yet the sun was bright,—
Yet could not rise and run away, and why I could not tell,
Unless it were that verily they had commenced their spell.
Again I shook and trembled when a startled insect's hum
Thrilled me with mingled feelings, as I thought the fairies come,
But no! for all unheeding still, slept the calm wood around,
Nought moving in the forest but the shadows on the ground.

Then came a voice! not strange and sweet, but clear and full and shrill,
It seemed to ring across the sea, and echo from the hill.
My young life curdled in a gasp, upon the awful sound;
My blood grew cold, my sense grew dim, my eager hopes were drowned
In the wild fear of things unknown. "Quick child, I cannot stay, [far away!"
You'll catch your death of cold; make haste, the rest are

Oh, downfall to my happiness! Rude waking from my dream, [theme,
When nurse's voice could make an end of such romantic
And yet, perhaps it was as well that then she forced me home, [come."
It left a hope of gossamer,—"Perhaps they might have

LUTEA RESEDA.

On the Comparative Merits of Mental and Natural Philosophy.

In the few remarks we are going to make upon this subject, although we may evince more partiality for the one study than the other, we wish to make it clear how very desirable it is that both should form a part of every liberal education.

To begin with Mental Philosophy, in its principal divisions of Logic, Psychology, and Metaphysics.

There can be no doubt that Logic, which has for its founder the great Aristotle, and which has since his time been studied for two thousand years, must have some important objects. It will be sufficient to remark here, that it is absolutely necessary, not only for the methodical arrangement of scientific knowledge, but what is more to our present purpose, it is necessary to teach people to reason correctly in ordinary conversation, to give sound instead of unsound reasons, and to guard them from falling into, and being imposed upon by fallacies. The need of the study is shown by the confusion which often arises in the discussion of difficult subjects, owing to a deficient knowledge of Logic.

In Psychology, there is much that is both interesting and useful. The phenomena which appear at first to be too various for our comprehension, are found to be the result of a small number of simple and uncompounded faculties, or principles of action. These faculties are the general laws of our constitution, and hold the same place in the Philosophy of Mind that the general laws we investigate in Physics hold in that branch of science. In both cases, the laws are to be investigated only by an examination of facts, and as long as these facts are unmixed with hypothesis the conclusions are as certain as in Physics. For instance, the laws which regulate the association of ideas can be ascertained, but it is going quite beyond the boundaries of the science to attempt an explanation of the association of ideas by certain supposed vibrations in the state of the brain, or to explain memory by means of supposed impressions made on the sensorium.

The cultivation of this branch of knowledge imparts a habit of reflection, and conduces to clearness of thought, and the power of making explanations. The common

remark that imperfect knowledge is indicated by an inability to explain, is, we think, a mistake, and only shows that a person is not in the habit of communicating his knowledge to others. In giving explanations, the difficulty is to remember and state clearly every different step by which we have been led to form a conclusion. Nothing contributes so much to form this habit as the science of which we are now speaking, which has the operations of the mind for its object. By making us reflect on the subjects of our consciousness, it enables us to arrest the current of thought, and to be prepared to repeat to others the arguments or trains of reasoning which led us to form such and such opinions.

Besides being a source of increased happiness, this study should be of great use to those engaged in teaching, by assisting them to watch over the impressions and associations which the mind receives in early life, and to secure it against the influence of prevailing errors,—for the instruction of youth in languages or any acquirement is of little importance compared to the formation in them of habits, and the training of all their different faculties.

Metaphysics, the science of being or existing, goes beyond Psychology, as it attempts to explain the nature of matter and of mind, as well as the union of the two; also, whether the Supreme Being, the ultimate cause, is separate from the universe, or connected with it. The mere mention of these serves to show how very uncertain its speculations must be, as being concerned with problems which, from their nature, cannot be solved.

The word Metaphysics was originally due to the fact that a treatise upon this subject, by Aristotle, was placed after a treatise by him on "Physics," "Meta" being the Greek word for "after." The Latin word is more significant, as it means a study of the supernatural. This part of the subject we think the most unprofitable; for some of the conclusions reached, instead of giving the repose of philosophic certainty, leave the mind in a whirl of wonder and perplexity; the disputed facts, which are not recognised as facts, producing only excitement and controversy.

In the infancy of the human race, Plato and Aristotle interested themselves in the only pursuit then open to them; but we do not doubt that minds of the highest order like theirs would, if now alive, devote themselves to the wonders of natural science, as well as to the unsatisfying topics of Metaphysics.

It may be said of Mental Philosophy, in all its branches, that it has much to do with general culture, owing to its connection with literature, enabling the student to understand a multitude of allusions, which otherwise would be like a sealed book. It also throws light upon many passages in poetry of the highest class. Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Dante's *Paradiso* might be cited, along with innumerable other instances.

Another advantage may be mentioned, which is, that it has a tendency to give enlarged views upon religion. Physics can overthrow some prejudices, and show that many superstitions, formerly thought invincible, are not now tenable; and it also emphatically testifies to the power of the Creator. But it does not teach people to strike the balance of probabilities, to form a conclusion or inference from a number of circumstances, or what is called cumulative evidence. Mathematicians are even said to be credulous, because they start in their science from assumptions which they take for granted.

Having said so much in favour of Mental Philosophy, we will now consider the superior merits of Physics; and we think that it is particularly in contrast with Metaphysics that it appears to advantage.

For continuous study, we should certainly give the preference to Physics, for these reasons,—*first*, that it rests on surer grounds; *secondly*, that it is more progressive; and *thirdly*, that it has a much larger field.

Metaphysics is the reverse of all this.—it is full of uncertainty, is very unprogressive, and has but a limited field. It is taken up with discussing a number of minute things which have no importance, and which might almost be called trifling, together with such uncertainty that, to this hour, the dispute is raging whether our ideas are intuitive or not; also as to the foundation of Mathematics in particular,—Stuart Mill maintaining that it is based upon experience, whereas others insist that it is self-evolved from a few necessary assumptions.

And, in addition to the strife caused by the topics themselves, there are endless discussions as to the meaning of this or that author, whether he upheld this or that theory, so hazy and vague are their compositions; while some of them alternate so much from one theory to another, that they may be claimed alike as supporters by thinkers of the most opposite kind. In this way, we find Sir W. Hamilton claiming Aristotle as entertaining Reid's "com-

mon sense" view, while Grote elaborately shows that this was a mistake. The unfortunate student who thinks that the misunderstanding and various interpretations of the views of Descartes or Spinoza were owing to the age they lived in, and its remoteness from the present, and who fancies that the mist will clear away as he gets on, soon finds himself undeceived, for the combat thickens, and there is just as much discussion about the meaning of Reid and Brown as about the earlier authors. Thus it happens, that theories which had their day in early times laid so little hold of the general mind that they are revived, after the lapse of ages, as something new.

There is some deception in the imposing definition of Metaphysics, that it is something "after" or beyond Physics, as if being different and less intelligible made it necessarily greater. That it is quite different we admit, and we would not for a moment deny the sublimity of its principal topics,—the nature of the Deity, of the soul, the question of immortality, the deepest thoughts which can occupy the mind of man; but in regard to these, how very little has it accomplished! As much was known by Plato and Aristotle as is known now. Comparatively speaking, it is almost a stationary science; for although some new theories have been advanced, these have been not merely overthrown by succeeding authors, but these authors have gone back to the earlier views. There is change without advance, like a door turning upon its hinges—much motion, but nothing more.

All this hardly deserves the name of progress. The lovers of this study are very indignant at this accusation, and vehemently protest that there is progress; but yet they never name anything that can be called a new discovery. Even the vaunted theory of Ideal Perception, about which an ardent votary once said,—"All philosophers are now agreed that we see only appearances, not real things," is not new, for Plato held it. It is true that his theory was somewhat different from the modern theory, but still they have the same essential point in common. Besides, it may be doubted whether all philosophers "are agreed" even on this point. Any way, they can neither prove their views nor show that they accord with probability, which is indispensably required for general acceptance by the world at large. There is a confidence felt in the truths announced by the masters

of Natural Science, greater than any accorded to the masters of Metaphysics. The results arrived at by a Newton or a Davy are received with none of the hesitation which is expressed with regard to Hume, Berkeley, or Mill's favourite views. Perhaps it will be said that if the subjects which occupy Metaphysicians are such as do not admit of proof, it is unfair to complain of its want; but granting that this uncertainty is no fault of theirs, it may yet fairly be an argument against the profitableness and pleasure of the study.

Turning to Physics, we feel as if standing on firm ground instead of a shifting quagmire, so exact are the results arrived at. As an instance of this, we may name the *Nautical Almanack*. This is a yearly record, in which eclipses of the sun and moon, of Jupiter's satellites, and a multitude of other matters of the last importance to navigation, are foretold with the most rigid accuracy. This book is the Mariner's guide on the trackless ocean, and daily and nightly its revelations bring safety to ships in all parts of the world. This mapping out beforehand, literally to a hairbreadth, the exact order and track in which the heavenly bodies will run their course through space, and the precise relative position they will occupy at any given moment, is a feat which, if applicable to the present year only, might well fill us with amazement; but it becomes infinitely more marvellous when we know that this book is regularly published three or four years in advance. Even for centuries hence the position of the heavenly bodies can be calculated. The precision of this science seems to give a rest to the mind, although it is not pretended that everything is certain. Many theories will be superseded by others when clearer light has been thrown upon some subjects by means of continued experiment, but we maintain that there is greater certainty than in Metaphysics, and that there are reasons for the changes. If there is any progress in Mental Philosophy, it is of the zig-zag kind; but when we take a survey of the Natural Sciences from the earliest times, we are astounded at the regularity of the progress, and how one thing has led to another, in a consecutive chain.

In these days, an outcry has been raised against the study of the Physical Sciences, owing to the spirit in which it has been conducted. It has been said that it leads to materialism, but this is certainly not a necessary result; and Sir H. Davy, although he was at the head of

science, thought very much the reverse. In the *Salmonia*, he says, "that which teaches will not be felt, that which sees will not be visible, that which commands sensations will not be felt." The highest minds have come to the conclusion that the results depend upon the spirit in which the sciences are studied; and here we may quote some words of Ruskin. "Natural Science, rendering our knowledge fruitful in accumulation and exquisite in accuracy, has acted for good or evil, according to the temper of the mind which received it; and though it has hardened the faithlessness of the dull and proud, has shown new grounds for reverence to hearts which were thoughtful and humble." A finer instance of this could not be found than in Faraday, a mind of the highest stamp, who would not allow his reason to starve his feelings; and Principal Tulloch, in his interesting *History of English Rationalism*, holds that the study of nature is highly religious. It may modify and enlarge our thoughts, but it has no tendency to shut out from us the presence of the Deity. On the contrary, all sober and wise minds feel the necessity of this noble spiritual Presence to illuminate nature and elevate human life.

And as to encouraging fatalism, that is a charge which may be quite as well laid to some theories in Metaphysics.

It might at first be thought that the study of the mind of man would be the most interesting, and that which would most impress us with its wonderful qualities; but so far from that, it tells us very little about it. One soon perceives how very little the mind can find out about itself, and comes to be painfully impressed with the limitation of its own powers; whereas the study of Natural Philosophy, although it does not attempt to explain the working of the mind, yet discovers its power,—and one is really filled with astonishment at the marvellous discoveries which the human mind has made. Physics has a two-fold character, manifesting, on the one hand, the power of the Creator in the wonderful works of nature, and on the other, the power of man to find out something about these works. His achievements in doing so strikingly attest the wonderful faculties bestowed upon him. No one, until he has studied Natural Philosophy, can have a just idea of the great things for which Providence has fitted his understanding, the extraordinary disproportion there is between his natural strength and his mental power. The study of Physics seems to enlarge one's mind, and

to prevent one dwelling upon self and its paltry concerns, and this is partly owing to the great variety of its subjects, and the immense scale of some of them.

Apart from its evident utility, which is almost too obvious to dwell upon here, it is a delightful study considered as knowledge for its own sake, and it leads us towards a better understanding of the universe in which it is our lot to dwell. The facts are so curious, the results so unexpected, that no fairy tale can be more interesting. It is surely a satisfaction to know, that the same thing which causes the sensation of heat, causes also fluidity; that electricity, which is seen on the back of a cat, when slightly rubbed on a frosty night, is the same as the lightning of the clouds; that plants breathe like ourselves, but differently by day and night. Nothing can, at first view, appear less alike than the processes of breathing and burning, of rusting (of metals), and the influence of a plant on the air it grows in at night; and yet these are the same operations.

Nothing can be less alike than the working of a steam-engine and the crawling of a fly upon the window, yet both are performed by the same means, the weight of the atmosphere.

That the diamond should be charcoal, that water is chiefly composed of an inflammable substance, may surely excite interest in any reflecting mind!

And what extraordinary truths are disclosed by Optics! Can anything surprise us more than to find that the colour of white is a mixture of all others; to say nothing of the wonders of Photography, and the interesting explanations of reflections, shadows, rainbows, &c.

And while the microscope shows us living organisms, too small to perceive by the naked eye, the telescope enlarges our vision in the other direction, and gives us a knowledge of enormous globes, at enormous distances, of their magnitude, motions, and perturbations. But the most curious recent discovery, is that made by Spectrum Analysis, namely, that we, residents on this earth, can ascertain the ingredients which compose the sun's atmosphere, and not that of our sun only, but of those more remote suns, whose light, despite its inconceivable velocity, takes years of passage through space to reach us. Of the total number of elementary substances known in our globe, nearly one-fourth have been discovered in the solar photosphere. Such facts establish conclusions of vast

importance to all our conceptions of the universe, in teaching the unity of that Power which acted in the creation of worlds.

In another line, how curious are the researches which give fresh proof of the chronological connection of man with animal species now extinct, and with periods of time anterior to the latest revolutions of the earth's surface. The results derived from the limited localities hitherto examined in this new path of enquiry, give good augury of what may be expected from similar research in other and more distant regions of the globe. Strange it is that even these more recent remains, and the innumerable vestiges of far older worlds of life, should have been so totally hidden from or misinterpreted by man until in our day it became our office to discover and decipher them.

It is impossible to allude to all the different branches, but if we mention Electricity, it will be sufficient to name the Atlantic Cable, a cord of wires stretching from the Old to the New World, transmitting an invisible agent, the lightning itself being the messenger of man: this alone may well move the mind to a mixed feeling of wonder and awe. In the dominion thus obtained over one of the most powerful and mysterious of the forces in the universe, we are contemplating one of the greatest triumphs of man.

In every branch of the common and Fine Arts, in every department of human industry, the influence of Chemistry is felt, and we may find, in the fable of Prometheus taking the flame from heaven to animate his man of clay, an emblem of the effects of fire in its application to chemical purposes, in creating the activity and almost the life of civil society. Tanning and dyeing of wool and silk are chemical processes, and almost all the instruments, necessary for the turner, the joiner, the stone-mason, the shipbuilder, and the smith, are chemical inventions; even the printing-press owes to chemistry its perfection. The formation of glass and porcelain is a chemical process; and the colours which the artist employs to frame resemblances of natural objects, or to create combinations more beautiful than ever existed in nature, are also derived from chemistry.

These are a few of the facts. But the highest gratification of all is that of examining the grounds on which the facts rest, so as to be satisfied that a belief in them is well

founded; for not isolated facts, but principles, are the chief objects of enquiry to the Philosopher. The student of Natural Science deserves quite as much the title of "Philosopher" or "Lover of Wisdom," as the Metaphysician, and it seems but just that, as in this country, the name should be given to both indiscriminately. Any one who has read Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, will see that as much acuteness and accuracy are required for the one as for the other.

Perhaps one reason that Natural Philosophy is so full of interest is that it has to do with a multitude of things with which we are surrounded in common life. The pleasures of life are doubled and trebled to him who is accustomed to trace the operation of general laws in circumstances where the uninformed eye perceives neither novelty nor beauty; he is, as it were, in an enchanted land, walking in the midst of wonders, and like the character which Shakespeare describes, he finds

> "Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

It is not only the amazing amount of discovery which makes this study so attractive, but also the possibility of future achievements; for the discoveries in Physics are such as cannot be anticipated. Two centuries ago, people as little expected to be able to rush over the face of the earth, at the rate of sixty miles an hour, as we expect to be able to fly at some future time. When Stephenson proposed his plan to Parliament, they scouted the notion of travelling at the rate of twenty miles an hour, and then insisted on his reducing it to ten miles. Lardner predicted that we should never be able to go to India by steam vessels.

Our limited space does not allow us to show all the indirect benefits which have arisen from Natural Science, —such as the increased intelligence of the lower orders, owing to the facility of locomotion, and their being enabled to afford a better education, owing to many of the necessaries of life being made cheaper and more accessible to them by science.

In conclusion, we would remark that both these sciences reflect light upon each other, and that as there are so many allusions in Mental Philosophy to Natural Philosophy, it would be well for students, who have the opportunity, to attend first a course of lectures upon Physics. ELSIE.

Mills Farrys:

A TALE OF THE FORTY FIVE.

CHAPTER IX

"TE DEUM"

BARBARA began more than half to repent her Presbyterian leanings as the grand words of the chant, and the solemn roll of the organ burst on her ear and when the singing was over she knelt down in the dim sunlight that struggled through the painted window, and repeated the responses of the litany her impressionable nature went to with all unto the old familiar forms that she had learned in her childhood She looked up with a puzzled look to Alaster who was kneeling beside her, but he did not seem to observe her His face was half hidden in his hands and it struck her that he was looking very grave She saw Nancy in Lady Macdonald's seat, she blushed and coloured up joyfully when her sister and Alaster came in They were late and Nancy had been waiting for them—for her sister, at least, for she had not known that Alaster had spent the night at Mills Farrys and a vague sort of alarm had crept over her when the service began and still no Barbara "Light-hearted as Nancy was something in Alaster's abrupt departure, and in Barbara's way of speaking of it, had made her feel a vague disquiet, which all the amusements of the picnic party, and the pleasure of spending the night at Carrick Castle had not altogether dispelled When the two, on each of whose account she was uneasy therefore entered together a weight seemed lifted from her heart. Both Barbara and Alaster noticed the bright blush of pleasure that came into the fair young face, and Barbara had looked round at Alaster with an appealing look of pride and admiration of her young sister's beauty. Alaster returned her smile, but immediately after his expression settled down into one of more than ordinary gravity, Mr Bennett preached as usual, and the old flippancy and evident contempt for his audience again grated on Barbara's high-strung nature, and the leanings towards old Mr Mackay and his simple kirk, which the *Te Deum* and litany had newly disrupted, returned in full force. At the door of the church Nancy joined them, laughing and [illegible]

with fun and mischief. She knew her sister's horror of the smart young curate, and the whim came into her mischievous little head to tease her, and pay Alaster out for his desertion of her yesterday by securing the curate's escort down the glen; so seeing him coming down the path from the church towards them, she darted away from her companions, and, by some pretended anxiety to know where the tune of a certain chant was to be found, easily entrapped the by no means unwilling young man; and, with fun and mischief sparkling in her bright eyes, came forward chatting gaily with him to join her companions.

"How do you do, Miss Forbes?" said the curate, with an elaborate bow.

"Mr Bennett, allow me to introduce you to Mr Macdonald," said Nancy.

Another elaborate bow, very gravely and somewhat haughtily acknowledged by Alaster.

"Charming weather this for the moors, Mr Macdonald, only time the Highlands are tolerable."

"Indeed," answered Alaster, quietly. "I am in the habit of considering them tolerable pretty frequently."

"Now, Miss Forbes," said Mr Bennett, turning to Barbara, "I am sure after your late experience in the south you will agree with me in longing for civilization in these barbarous solitudes, and for the pleasant interchange of thought among cultivated people. It must indeed be a sad change to you from the courtly society which you are so well-fitted to adorn, to return to these primeval deserts."

"Indeed, Mr Bennett," said Barbara, "my taste, I fear, is a very vulgar one, but I confess to preferring the deserts you speak of to anything I had the pleasure of seeing in the south. I had rather a thousand times live at Milla Forres than in any other place in the wide world, at least as far as my experience goes."

"Good gracious! Miss Forbes, you can't mean it; you, with your grace and beauty, to prefer the society of boors to that of gentlemen,—the thing's impossible!"

Barbara turned on him quickly, her eye flashing. "Sir, you forget yourself, the gentleman is he who is mindful of the feelings of others, the boor he who forgets them; I have the pleasure of wishing you good morning," she said, and, courtseying haughtily, she turned down a little path which ran along the burn side, followed by Alaster and Nancy, and leaving the unfortunate curate standing alone on the high-road.

"Well done, Barbara," laughed Nancy, "you have fairly extinguished poor Mr Bennett, he wont venture to peep again for a month, I think. Did you see his look of blank astonishment and dismay? Alaster, I don't think you ever believed me when I told you what a terrible person Barbara can be when she likes, perhaps you'll believe it now?"

"It was well deserved," said Alaster, smiling.

"No, it wasn't," said Barbara. "I had no business to speak like that to him, he can't help it if he *is* a wretched little creature, I must go and tell him so." And before either of her companions knew what she was doing, she had turned back, and was walking rapidly towards the high-road. Nancy turned to Alaster, a look of comical dismay on her face.

"She'll mend matters a great deal if she tells him that, wont she?" she said. "It's just like Barbara though, she never could rest if she thought she had said anything unkind or unfair till she had gone and unsaid it again. I'm sorry though, for it would have done the little wretch all the good in the world."

In the meantime, Barbara had walked back to the road with rapid steps, and found the discomfited curate standing just as she had left him, neither eyes nor mouth seemed yet to have succeeded in returning to their ordinary expression of flippant assurance, but remained wide open in stupid wonder.

"Mr Bennett, I am sorry,—I had no right to say what I did, I suppose you can't help not understanding," she said, "wont you shake hands with me?" And before the bewildered curate had recovered sufficiently for speech, she had performed the rite of reconciliation, and was again half-way down the path to the burn.

"Well, Barbara," laughed Nancy, as she rejoined her companions, her face flushed between the excitement of her late encounter and her rapid pace, "have you succeeded in comforting your friend the curate? I was just telling Alaster he'll perhaps believe me now when I tell him what a terrible person Miss Forbes can sometimes be."

Alaster was watching Barbara's flushed face and still trembling hands, with a smile, half amused, half tender. He could not help liking her all the better for her indignant onslaught on the curate, and admiring the frank honesty that made her apology so ready, whenever she

saw that she was wrong. Barbara, however, understood nothing of this. Deeply humiliated in her own eyes, she felt as if she must have fallen irretrievably in Alaster's, and she was herself astonished at the pain which the thought gave her. At her sister's words, she turned towards him, colouring still more deeply.

"I am always doing these sort of things, and then I'm always sorry when it's done and can't be undone," she said.

"Don't distress yourself," said Alaster, the comical smile deepening round the corners of his lips, "it was only a necessary piece of discipline, the curate should be greatly obliged to you. I hope it will teach him discretion for the future. I'm sure he stands much in need of it."

"Well, I hope so; but even then, it's not *my* calling to teach him discretion."

"All the more meritorious to give him a gratuitous lesson, then."

Barbara laughed and shook her head, but somehow the feeling that Alaster was not irretrievably shocked after all was a great relief to her mind.

"Alaster," she said, suddenly looking up, "I am going round by old Peggy M'Lauchlan's cottage. You must tell Nancy all about yesterday by yourselves."

Nancy looked up in sudden surprise, but before she could ask any questions, Barbara had turned down a little path that lead by stepping-stones across the burn, and left the lovers to tell and hear yesterday's eventful story by themselves.

Peggy M'Lauchlan's cottage lay in a sheltered nook under an over-hanging crag, about half-a-mile further down the burn side. The path to it wound round the other side of a low heather-covered hill, and emerged again on the water's edge just where the cottage stood. So Barbara very soon lost sight of her two companions. She had made the little detour purposely, for she thought that after the danger and escape of yesterday, of both of which Nancy was still totally ignorant, Alaster must have much to say to his promised bride. As soon as she got out of view, she sauntered slowly along, rejoicing in the quiet solitude of the great hills, and now and then stopping to pick heather, and blue bells, and ferns, and bind them into fantastic bouquets. Peggy M'Lauchlan was an old woman of upwards of ninety years, who had nursed Barbara and Nancy's father when he was a baby. Her

husband had been the gardener at Milla Forres, and her son, Colonel Forbes' foster brother, had joined the army with his young master, and waited on him with true Highland fidelity; but he had the seeds of the fatal disease, consumption, of which his father had died while his son was still a boy, in his system, and, after a few years of faithful service, came back to his mother's house to die. She had had but one other child, a lovely young girl, but her name had long ceased to be mentioned at Milla Forres. One night she had disappeared, and no one knew where she had gone. Long and earnest search had been made for her, dead or alive, for at first they thought she must have fallen from some cliff, or got lost, and perished on the mountains. So spotless was her character, that it was long ere the thought ventured to intrude itself, that she might not be dead,—but worse. When, however, all search proved unavailing, and some passing gipsies reported to have seen such a girl in a carriage with a gentleman in uniform, the horrible suspicion, changing, as one circumstance after another seemed to confirm it, into almost certainty, arose that it must be even so. From the moment the widow entertained the thought, she ceased to speak of her daughter. She forbid no one to do so, yet few, after having done so once, and seen the pain that contracted the broad brow, and blanched still more the pale cheek, would ever speak to her on that subject again.

Altogether alone now in the world, with health and heart both broken, the widow left the gardener's cottage and went into the little dwelling where she now lived, and which Colonel Forbes had built for his foster-mother. To his children she was strongly attached, in fact she looked upon them much in the light of grandchildren of her own, and many a kindly errand Barbara and Nancy made to the little cottage in the glen. Especially on Sundays, Peggy's cottage was a favourite resort, for the old woman's eyes were too dim to read for herself the blessed words that had always been her comfort in all her afflictions, and the girls felt it at once a duty and a pleasure to turn in there on their way home from service, to read a chapter, and have a chat with Peggy. To-day, Barbara found her, as usual, sitting by the tidy fireside in her great arm-chair, with her spotless mutch covering her grey hair, and her white kerchief crossed over her bosom, and the usual quiet peace looking out of her dim old eyes. A comfort-

able looking tortoise-shell cat was dozing on a bit of carpet in front of the hearth, and the kettle, for the old woman's evening meal, singing on the fire. A little table beside her was tidily covered with a white cloth, and on it stood the old brown teapot and three cups and saucers, a plate of scones was browning before the fire, and a pot of delicious-looking butter, and some rich yellow honeycomb stood on the table.

"Well, Peggy, how are you to-night?" said Barbara, as she entered, coming up and kissing the placid, wrinkled brow, "you see I've got safe back from the south again."

"Yes, thank the Lord for all His mercies, I'm fain to see ye back again, Miss Barbara, ye'll no be sorry to win hame, I'se warrant, for a' the grandeur o' the south country?"

"No, I'm not sorry, 'there's nae place like hame,' you know, Peggy, the old song's right about that, though I enjoyed being in Edinburgh, and seeing all the grand folk too."

"Aye, aye, ye're right to do that, my hinny, though I hae my doots. I hae my doots o' the company ye were in; thae Papishers are no to be trusted, I'm afeart; but the Lord 'll tak' care o' His ain."

"I wish the Prince were'n't a Papist, Peggy, but what can we do? You wouldn't have a Forbes a traitor to our lawful sovereign, Papist or no Papist, would you?"

"I'm nae sae sure about a Papisher *being* our lawfu' sovereign, Miss Barbara, my mind's no a' thegither clear on that point, but as I said afore, Papisher or no Papisher, the Lord'll tak' care o' His ain, an' keep them frae the evil, even like the apple o' His e'e, an' ye're yin o' His, Miss Barbara, I'm nane feart for ye."

Barbara flushed up all over at the old woman's words. Very shy in anything that related to her personal feelings in religious matters, though she had often read to old Peggy the words of eternal life, she had seldom spoken much to her of her own religious feelings, and she felt at once surprised and pleased at the old woman's undoubted assurance on her behalf. She answered in a low, hesitating voice—

"I'm glad you think so, Peggy, I'm sometimes half afraid to think so myself."

"Na na, my hinny, dinna be feart, ye're yin o' His, 'predestined afore the creation o' the warld, there's nane sall pluck ye frae His hand,' Papishers or no Papishers."

Barbara half smiled at the odd ending of the old woman's speech, and then added, gravely,—

"How do you know that, Peggy? it seems to me almost presumptuous to dare to think that the Lord could think about electing me. I know your minister, good old Mr Mackay, believes in election,—isn't that what you call it? But I can hardly bring myself to think, that the great God could so think about poor me."

"If the Lord didna think aboot ye, Miss Barbara, hoo did ye come to be ava? An' gin He did think aboot ye, d'ye think the Lord, wha kens the en' frae the beginnin', didna ken what was to be the upshot o' the creatur He had made?"

"I suppose so," said Barbara, musingly. She sat silent a minute, and then went on.—"But if it's all arranged like that beforehand, how can anybody help anything? How can the people help it who are not elected?"

"Aye, there's the deefficulty, I canna tell ye the 'hoos' o't, that wad tak' mair book learning than the Lord's been pleased to bless me wi', but it's true for a' that; ye ken yersel, that ye *can* help things, that ye can do richt or wrang, jist as ye'r ain inclination mak's ye. The Lord's kenning which ye'll do doesna prevent that, though I canna explain hoo the twa work thegither."

Barbara sat silently thinking for a few minutes, then looking up, she said,—

"What chapter shall I read you to-night, Peggy?"

"Read me first the twenty-third Psalm, hinny, I'se ne'er tired o' hearing that."

And Barbara began to read, slow and distinctly, the grand old words of strength and comfort that have been to poor, frail, trembling humanity through all the ages, like the 'shadow of a great rock in a weary land':—"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." When she had done, Peggy sat silent a few minutes, and then she said,—

"Aye aye, it's a' true. I've walked through mony a shadow i' my day, an' He's aye been wi' me, an' some o' them hae been blacker shadows than e'er was the 'valley o' the shadow o' death.' His rod an' His staff they comforted me." She paused a few moments, and Barbara also sat, looking silently and reverently at the wrinkled old face, that bore marks of so many shadows, and yet was

now lighted up with such a peace, and thought that, in very truth, it was a "peace that passeth all understanding." By and by, the old woman went on,—

"Aye, ye'r young, Miss Barbara, an' ye've a' the shadows afore ye yet, my puir lassie, but ye're yin o' His, and He'll see ye through them a', min' ye that, my hinny. I'm nane feart for you. I tell ye ye'll be weel seen to. He's ne'er forgotten auld Peggy a' these fourscore years and ten."

They sat silently for a little, and then old Peggy rose from her arm-chair, and hobbling to the table, said,—

"Noo, my hinny, ye'll hae a cup o' tea. I hae gotten some fine warm scones ready for ye, and Miss Nancy,—what's come o' her this afternoon?"

"Oh, she's otherwise occupied just now, you know, Peggy, I left her and young M'Donald to walk down the glen together," said Barbara, smiling. The old woman smiled too, and said,—

"The Lord bless the bonny lamb. She kens little o' the shadows yet, lang may it be sae, but gin it comes, He'll keep her too."

After tea, Barbara once more kissed the old woman's placid brow, and set out on her way home.

CHAPTER X

IN THE MIST

Six happy uneventful weeks passed over the little party at Milla Forres. To all three, perhaps, time never had seemed to run so quickly. Pleasant morning rides over the heather, or lazy, happy saunters by the burn-side, or adventurous scrambles up the rugged mountain paths were followed by cozy evenings (for the autumn days were fast shortening into winter), spent in the old hall round the great fire-place, with its crackling wood fire; while Alaster read aloud, and the girls worked, or all sang together plaintive Scotch songs or wild Gaelic chants. So the days seemed to fly with swift and noiseless wings over these three young, careless, happy heads. It would have been hard to say which of the three was happiest. Colonel Forbes had not yet returned home, and no further arrangements had been made about the the time of Nancy's marriage, and they were all too happy and too contented as they were, to wish for any change in the

existing state of things. Alaster was living at Carrick Castle, but every morning brought him to Milla Forres, and he never returned home till late in the evening.

One bright day of closing autumn (it was now the very end of October) the three started early in the forenoon to climb Benvorlish, the mountain which lay right behind Milla Forres. They were prepared for a long scramble, and carried with them a little basket of provisions, meaning to lunch on the top of the hill, and return to an early tea-dinner in the evening. The day was clear and cloudless, and the grand old hills stood out in strong relief against the bright cold blue of the October sky. Laughing and chatting, and trying merry childish races, in the very exuberance of life and spirit, the three made the ascent, and sat down on the top in triumph to their well-earned meal. They sat laughing and talking over their extempore repast rather longer than they had intended, at last Barbara sprang to her feet with a sudden start.

"Look yonder!" she said, "there's the mist coming up the Giant's Gap, we must make haste home, or we shall get into it."

Her companions looked, and saw a thin white vapour spreading slowly through a great chasm, some thousand feet below them.

"Surely that mist can't do us any harm," said Alaster, "it's away down in the gorge yonder."

"I know that," said Barbara, "but the mists on Benvorlish always begin in the Giant's Gap; indeed, we must make haste down," and she began hurriedly gathering together the knives and forks, and stowing them away in the basket.

"Come quick," she said, beginning to run down the side of the hill.

Alaster perceived by her voice that she was alarmed, and, with Nancy, followed her rapid steps as quickly as he could. In about ten minutes Barbara turned round again, to give an anxious look at the ascending mist, which was now rolling in thick folds through the gap.

"It's got as far as Donald's Rock," she exclaimed, "it will be here in ten minutes. Alaster, look to Nancy, take hold of her arm."

"It can't be here this half-hour, surely, Barbara," he said, "look, it's a long way off yet, you are surely frightening yourself needlessly."

Barbara merely answered, "Keep hold of Nancy," and

continued descending as fast as she could. She had got round the corner of a projecting rock, and was out of sight for a moment, when Nancy put her foot on an unsteady stone, which rolled over with her weight. Alaster caught her as she fell.

"Are you hurt, Nancy?" he said anxiously.

"Not much," she said. "I think I have hurt my ankle," she added, as she began again to try to walk. "I'm afraid," she said, looking up piteously into Alaster's face, as she sat down on a projecting rock, "I'm afraid it's sprained; what shall we do? Oh, we shall get lost in the mist!" she exclaimed, beginning to cry between pain and fear.

Alaster looked round anxiously. Already great volumes of mist were rising all around them; he could not see ten paces before him. He strained his eyes in vain to catch sight of Barbara. He shouted her name at the top of his voice, but could hear no answer. Nancy began to wring her hands and weep bitterly, "Oh, what shall we do, what shall we do, oh Barbara, Barbara!"

"Don't cry, Nancy," said Alaster, "we'll all get home safe, I've no doubt;" but his voice sounded anxious, and he still continued shouting at intervals, "Barbara, Barbara," but there was no answer. His anxiety grew more and more intense as the mist drifted thicker and thicker round them, and he felt utterly perplexed and helpless. He knew there were fearful caverns on that side of the mountain, and he dreaded every moment to hear a shriek which should announce that Barbara had fallen over some precipice in the darkness. He knew not which way to seek her, even had he been free; and what could he do with Nancy, now, poor child, half-fainting between pain, terror, and anxiety for her sister. He turned to her gently, "Nancy," he said, "you must let me try to carry you home; I'll carry you as gently as I can; the mist has cleared a little just now, and when I have got you home, I will come back for Barbara—that is to say, if she is not home before us."

He spoke cheerfully, but his heart was very heavy with an unspeakable dread. Of his own and Nancy's ultimate safety he never doubted, it was of Barbara he thought. He lifted Nancy's slight form easily in his arms, and, taking advantage of every momentary clearance of the mist, made slow but constant progress down the mountain. Outwardly he was very quiet and still, but oh what

a tempest was raging in his heart. In every sound he seemed to hear Barbara's death shriek, and in his intense anxiety he almost forgot the suffering girl he held in his arms, and neither heard nor answered her trembling questions. He was grappling with a great agony, of which the girl, whose heart was lying so close to his own, never dreamt. She, too, was intensely anxious about her sister, but she did not know the dangers of that side of the mountain as Alaster did, and his cheerful words about finding Barbara at home when they got there, had greatly re-assured her. After an hour's silent, stern climbing, they got safe to the foot of the hill, and then a quarter of an hour's swift walking brought them to the door of Milla Forres. Elspet opened the door, anxious about them, for the nightfall had come on.

"Is Miss Barbara at home?" said Alaster, in a hoarse, low voice through his shut teeth.

"At home? Hoo could that be whan she's been wi' you a' day. Hech, sirs, Miss Nancy, what's the matter?" said Elspet, now seeing for the first time that Alaster had Nancy in his arms.

Alaster made no reply, but hastily striding past the old woman into the hall, he laid Nancy on a sofa, and saying, in a low suppressed voice, "I'm going to find Barbara," he was out of the house again in a minute. The stars were shining brightly in the valley, and the new moon was just rising behind Benvorlish, as he turned from the door of Milla Forres. If any one had been there to see him as he strode along, they would have wondered on what desperate quest the man could be bound, whose face looked so white and haggard, and whose teeth seemed clenched in such mighty agony. Through the quiet valley, sleeping so peacefully in the moonlight, he strode with wild hurrying steps. At the door of the gardener's cottage he stopped, and sternly desired Sandy M'Pherson, the gardener, and his son to set out at once to the mountain, in directions he indicated, to search for the missing girl, and, taking a lanthorn, he proceeded on another route himself.

"Will yer honour no let Duncan gang wi' ye, he kens ilka craig o' Benvorlish as weel's the road to the kirk," said old Sandy, "an' yer honour's but a stranger in thae pairts?"

But Alaster only impatiently waved his hand in the direction he had already indicated to the gardener's son, and strode silently on his solitary way.

"Hech, sirs," said Mrs M'Pherson, "saw ye e'er a creatur sae distranght? Keep an e'e on him, Sandy, for I'm certain sure he scarce kens which end o' him's uppermost, and Benvorlish i' the mirk's nae place for fu' men or bairns."

"Whist ye, woman, an' dinna misca' the lad; i'st no eneuch to mak a wise man wud to think o' our bonny young leddy i' the mist on Benvorlish, an' him 'neist door to her brither. Duncan are ye ready, lad? Guidwife, keep a light i' the window to let's see whar aboots we are."

So saying, Sandy took one lanthorn, and Duncan the other, and set out on different routes up the mountain, leaving the gudewife to attend to the lighting of the cottage window.

"Neist her brither!" muttered she to herself, as she placed the solitary tallow candle on the window-sill, leaving the rest of the cottage in shadow, excepting where the wood fire sent flickers of light through the room—"Neist her brither, said ye?" she continued, seating herself on a low stool beside the fire, "weel she's a winsome lassie, Miss Barbara, as ony brither micht be prood o', there's nae denying that, but gin he hadna said Miss *Barbara* wi' his ain lips, I wad hae thocht it was Miss *Nancy* that had gotten hersel lost i' the mist, by the look o' his een, savin' his favour."

In the meantime Alaster strode on his solitary way up the mountain. He kept as near to the path which he had followed on his way down with Nancy, as the imperfect sight which he had got through the mist of its landmarks would allow. His eye had almost unconsciously noted everything which he could see in the driving darkness with a view to returning by the same road, for the last sight he had had of Barbara, had been as she disappeared behind a projecting rock just before Nancy had sprained her foot, and though he trembled to think where she might afterwards have wandered in her vain endeavours to find a path, that was their only clue to her whereabouts. He had directed the gardener and his son to go by two other paths, and to meet him about the place where he had last seen Barbara. As he went along, at intervals he shouted her name, but an echo from the rock, or the quick whirr of wings, as some moorfowl was started by the noise from its nest in the heather, was the only answer. Hour after hour passed, as he wandered up and down, scrutinising at the foot of every

precipice, his face getting whiter and sterner, and more haggard. The moon had ridden half its majestic path across the heavens, and he had just sat down for the first time that night on a stone, a feeling of numb despair was succeeding the wild tumult in his heart, and he felt as if he could search no longer, when he thought he heard a distant shout. He started to his feet—yes, there it was again, clearer than before, he thought he could even distinguish old Sandy's voice. He staggered along in the direction of the sound, for his head was dizzy, and he could with great difficulty prevent his trembling knees from giving way beneath him. Now that hope or fear was to be realised, he felt almost as if he would like to run away in the uncertainty, rather than face the awful crisis. As he neared the spot from which he had heard the voices, the glitter of old Sandy's lanthorn shone before him, from a sort of crevice under a high overhanging rock. As he got still nearer he saw the old man on his knees, bending over a prostrate form, while Duncan held the lanthorn by his side. She was found then; but was it life or death? He staggered forward.

"Eh, Sir," said Duncan, as he saw him approaching, "she's faen frae the rock, my faither fan' her lying here."

"Dead?" said Alaster, in a hoarse voice.

"Na, na, Sir," said old Sandy, lifting his bronzed face, which had been stooped very closely over the prostrate girl. "She's nane dead, I can hear her heart beating. Duncan, ye feckless loon, to frichten the gentleman wi' yer havers; gie's the licht here. Feel, sir, for yersel, her heart's beating. The Lord be thankit for a' his mercies," said the old man, moving away to let Alaster satisfy himself that the vital spark was not yet extinct.

"Yes, it beats, thank God!" said Alaster, in a stifled voice, after he had laid his hand on her heart. "We must get her home," he added, turning to the gardener. "I will stay here by her, while you and Duncan go and bring some sort of a litter. I have some wine here," he said, pulling from his pocket the little flask, which the merry party had used at their picnic that forenoon, and in which some of the wine still remained. What an age it seemed to Alaster since the rest had been drunk, amidst songs and laughter on the top of Benvorlich!

The gardener and his son went, as directed, to the cottage, for means of conveying the insensible girl home, leaving Alaster alone with her in the moonlight. Very

gently he raised her head, with its long dank hair, and laid it on his knees, and wiped the brow damp with dew, and wetted the white lips with wine, and chafed the death-cold hands in his own. At last he thought he felt a little warmth spreading itself through the cold frame, and bending over her he showered passionate kisses on the quiet pale brow, exclaiming, "Oh, Barbara, my beloved, will you not live for me?" Just then the blue eyes opened tremulously for a moment, and a flickering smile lighted up the still face, then again the heavy eyelids closed. JEANIE MORISON.

(*To be continued.*)

A Few Words about Painting and other Fine Arts.

ALL the arts have something in common, they all resemble each other in this respect—that their object is to confer pleasure. Instruction may be indirectly conveyed by art, but the chief glory of the artist is, that he ministers to the amusements of the community, and this is a very noble function, far superior to that of ministering to our necessities or comforts, for it implies an intrinsic superiority of nature. The gifts required to make a successful merchant are very inferior to those required by the artist. To regulate the pleasures of a community is to have a greater moral influence upon human beings than is directly possessed by any other class, except that of teachers.

The importance attaching to the different kinds of amusement will be at once seen, if we consider the degeneracy of the Romans at the time when their chief diversions consisted in the exhibition of the blood-stained amphitheatre; and of the Spaniards, who still delight in bull fights.

Vigorous persons require their amusements to be of a vigorous and elevated kind, and such as will employ every faculty. As Professor Seeley well remarks, the different kinds of arts answer to different faculties, and there is a likeness running through all.

The primary object is to please, and this object is effected in all by addressing the imagination.

There are two primary modes or means of pleasing,—

1st, Rythm, which is common to all the arts; 2d, Imitation, which prevails chiefly in poetry and painting.

The first, Rythm, is common to all, for what is music, but rythmical sound? What is poetry, but rythmical speech? And the same principle or mode prevails in painting, sculpture, and architecture, although it assumes in these a somewhat different shape,—that of form or symmetry. Rythm is nothing but proportion, and to say that it is a primary mode of art is merely to say that human beings delight in regularity, in pattern, and in arrangement. In music and poetry, the arts which deal with time, this principle of regularity appears as rythm; and in the other arts, which deal with space, form takes the place of rythm; they differ from each other as the sense of sight from hearing, and the pleasure which the ear receives from a Spenserian stanza is analogous to the pleasures which the eye perceives from the spire of Salisbury, or the towers of Canterbury. But though regularity pervades art, it does not by itself constitute that which is highest in art.

The second mode, or means of pleasing, which we have mentioned, namely Imitation, predominates in poetry and painting, and takes the place of rythm.

We do not here mean the paltry imitation of paltry things, which is the lowest part of art, but the power of representing, it may be ideally representing, the grandest works of nature, human beings, or the glories of mountains, rivers or verdant plains, whether by painting or by words, as in poetry. For that which is ideal, is still in one sense imitative of reality, but it is a choicer reality.

It is this principle of imitation which gives to art its boundless range. Without it, painting would not rise beyond arabesque, nor poetry beyond metrical rhetoric. With it, painting acquires a field as large as the visible universe, and poetry one even more unlimited, comprehending the world of thought and the world of sense together. And here the supremacy of poetry is apparent, because speech is the only mirror in which the whole universe can be reflected. With colours, or in marble, we can express only what we see but there is nothing that the mind can think which cannot be uttered in speech. The province of the poet is limited only by the variety of human enjoyments. Whatever is in reality subservient to our happiness is a source of pleasure when presented to our conceptions, and sometimes derives an increased

[illegible] from the heightenings of imagination. To the poet, all the various charms of external nature, all that is interesting in human character, all those truths which make the heart itself feel better and more happy,—all these supply materials, out of which he forms and peoples a world of his own.

In the poetry of all ages, we possess, as it were, a shifting view of the universe, as it has appeared to successive generations of men, because the poetry of each age is according to the predominant modification of the human mind in each age. At one time it is occupied with deeds of bravery, scenes of strife and tumult; at another, with simple pleasures, country life, and peaceful existence: at another time it discourses of cities, gallantries, and galeties. And sometimes, as in our own age, it takes a philosophical tone, delights in the grandeur of eternal laws, and endeavours to discover, in the structure of things, the tracks of a beneficent plan.

Painting is akin to poetry. When the painter forms new combinations of his own, he avails himself of his professional skill, as the poet avails himself of language, only to convey the ideas in his mind. To deceive the eye by accurate representation is not his aim, but to speak to the imagination. Imitation is not the end, but the means, which he employs to accomplish his end. In painting a beautiful landscape it should be his object to convey the impression made upon the mind, and this could not be done by an exact copy, he must make certain deviations, because, in the works of nature, in many instances, beauty and sublimity are united with circumstances, which are either indifferent, or which obstruct the general effect. Experience and observation enable the artist to make this discrimination, and to form a creation of his own, more faultless than ever fell under the observation of his senses. The artist may be called great, in proportion as he makes these deviations with skill and feeling.

Although there are some passages in poetry which could not be expressed by painting, such as many a scene in Paradise Lost,—for instance, the description of Satan and his dart alighting on the earth, or generally speaking, such passages of descriptive sublimity,—yet, on the whole, painting has the advantage of being able to produce a more vivid impression, owing to the greater representative fidelity; and it is curious that even the highest flights of

poetical fancy are compounded of elements which are addressed to the sense of vision.

Music is creative, and gives scope for imagination and fancy, but its most remarkable peculiarity is the way in which it appeals to the feelings, and which causes it to be, what may be called, an effective accompaniment on a variety of occasions. A regiment is stirred by the exciting music of its band, in a way that we should hardly expect a picture to accomplish, although pictorial aid, even in this respect, was not despised in the middle ages, when the pictures of patron saints were carried at the head of the army, and perhaps if the experiment were tried, a picture of his native place, might rouse the soldier to fight for home and country, as much as "Auld Lang-syne." That paintings can express pathos, those will admit, who have seen Noel Paton's "Return from the Crimea," Faed's "Mitherless Bairn," or Titian's "Entombment."

There is, however, no doubt that music touches the feelings more intensely. Some persons fainted on hearing Catalani in the oratorio of the Messiah, and the overpowering effect of the exquisite music in St Peter's and the Sistine Chapel in the Holy Week is well known. Every one must feel its importance in a religious service, —the sublimity of the organ peeling through the "long drawn aisle," while the voices of the white-robed choristers seem like angels' voices, elevating our thoughts to a higher sphere. And how it rouses in the heart the feeling of devotion to hear the chaunting from the top of Magdalene towers at Oxford on the 1st of May.

But after all, the feeling excited by music is of the vaguest kind. We can tell whether joy, grief, or triumph is expressed, but what the particular occasion of the feeling may be, it is impossible to tell. The air of "Farewell to Lochaber" is most pathetic, but without language we could not know that it was intended to represent a poor soldier taking leave of his house and his wife. Whenever we hear an air without words, it can inspire only general emotion, and the effect is comparatively feeble. It is said that the "Pastorale" of Corelli was intended for an imitation of the song of angels hovering above the fields of Bethlehem, and gradually soaring up to heaven; it is impossible, however, that the music itself can convey any such impression, it can convey only the feeling of solemnity, of rapture, of enthusiasm; imagination must do

the rest. If another name were given to this piece of music, and it were supposed to relate to a much less awful event, its effects, though still powerful, would be much diminished.

The principal cause of beauty in music is, therefore, the facility with which it is associated with feelings, from its resemblance to tones in which feelings are expressed, and a great part of its power is derived from its combination with poetry, which makes these feelings specific.

At the point we have now reached, we consider poetry to be first, painting second, and music third, owing to its more limited range and its want of connection with thought, and this corresponds to the test often laid down, that those arts are the most worthy in which the greatest mental labour is employed, and the greatest mental pleasure is produced, and in which the manual labour is the least apparent.

But now, we think it may be said in addition, that though no doubt music requires the exercise of the reflective powers in the study of harmony, yet that painting is on the whole more intellectual as respects the amount of knowledge required.

For all kinds of painting, it is indispensible to have a thorough knowledge of composition, perspective, aerial effect, and chiaro-obscuro, the subject of light and shade being of the very highest importance, and having the interest of an inexhaustible subject, as no principles have been discovered in regard to it, although there are rules, and much depends upon the skill and judgment of the painter.

Then colour is a study by itself, and what a charm there is in it, and what variety from the deep tints of Titian to the delicate tints laid on by Correggio, or by Turner in his water-colours.

For historical painting, whether sacred or secular, accurate historical knowledge is required; also that of costume, of architecture, and interiors, so as to give an air of truth to all the accessories.

Then for landscape painting, besides having poetical feeling, the artist should be, according to Ruskin, a geologist, a botanist, and much more besides. He should have an imitative faculty superior to other men, an observant eye, a retentive memory for form and images, and a power of sympathy which carries with it a power of divination. We can only imitate what interests us strongly;

he, therefore, who can imitate many things, is he who is interested in many things, and the artist, whose mind mirrors and reflects everything, has this power simply because he lives more intensely than others.

Amid all the varieties we must not forget portrait painting, so feelingly addressed by Campbell—

"O thou by whose expressive art
Her perfect image Nature sees,
In union with the graces start,
And sweeter by reflection please!

In whose creative hand the hues
Fresh from yon orient rainbow shine,
I bless thee, Promethean muse!
And call thee brightest of the nine!

Shall song its witching cadence roll?
Yes, even the tenderest air repeat,
That breath'd when soul was knit to soul,
And heart to heart responsive beat

What visions rise! to charm, to melt,
The lost, the loved, the dead are near,
Oh, hush that strain too deeply felt,
And cease that solace too severe

But thou, serenely silent art,
By heaven and love wast taught to lend
A milder solace to the heart,
The sacred image of a friend."

We need scarcely remind our readers how Olivarez survives in the canvas of Velasquez and Strafford in that of Vandyke. Philip III. of Spain owned that he had been immortalized by the brush of Titian, and how many of our ancestral houses are indebted to our own Sir Joshua Reynolds and Raeburn.

If we now consider the art under a different aspect, that of being studied, not by the great masters who make it the business of their lives, but by amateurs, could there be a more delightful amusement than sketching? for if figure drawing is grander, yet the other has more variety, and gives much more room for play of fancy and creative power; it is also much less mechanical. The amusement it gives in travelling is almost too obvious to mention, but at all times it trains the mind to observation, and causes an increased enjoyment of the beauties of nature. It is not only an aid to memory, but the habit gives exactness to one's perceptions. The eye is insensibly taught to seize on the particular shape and hue of

every object, as if it were about to transfer them to canvas, and so the mind retains a clear and vivid conception of it, even without making the sketch. Then the quietness with which drawing can be pursued at home is a great advantage, as it can be carried on without annoyance to others, and even when there is illness in the house.

The difference between painting and music, in point of sociality, is often remarked; but the difference is really not so very great, and is partly due to the fact that the lovers of music are the most numerous, and also that music can take place by candlelight, at the hour when social gatherings are going on at any rate. And it must be remembered that a number of the listeners are quite indifferent, or only enduring it, for the sake of the conversation, or some other part of the entertainment.

Even the real lovers of music do not care much for the light music of our musical parties. Supposing that it is good, which sometimes happens, there are too many distractions for the thorough enjoyment of it.

Drawing is sociable so far, that those who have a mutual taste like to talk about it, and to sketch together; if a number of persons take sketches from the same point, it is interesting to compare them, as they will all be different. Among artists there are drawing clubs which meet in the evening, and which may be considered to correspond to musical re-unions. It is not easy for a number of people to look at the same painting at once, but many a pleasant hour may be spent with one friend going through some noble picture gallery, or a modern exhibition.

We may now mention two reasons for the greater popularity of music, and shew that this is no good ground for inferring its superiority. One reason for music appearing to greater advantage, is, that it is carried to more perfection in this country than the other art. Consider the complex beauty of the Opera at Covent Garden, with its threefold attractions of singing, drama, and scenery; the enormous scale of oratorios in Exeter Hall, with seven hundred voices in the chorus; and still more in the Crystal Palace, with five thousand voices, the grand compositions of the grandest of masters being performed in the latter case with faultless execution. Then there are numbers of good classical concerts, not only in London, but sometimes in Edinburgh, and in most large towns in England. Now, to have anything cor-

responding to this in painting, one should go to the Vatican at Rome, or the galleries of Dresden and Paris; and those who have been to Spain tell us, that we do not know here what a Velasquez or a Murillo is like. And even if a person had these opportunities, it will be of no use, unless he has already cultivated his taste, and acquired great knowledge. For to have a right appreciation of paintings, the spectator should have all the qualities or knowledge which we ascribed a few pages back to the artist himself, almost all, except the actual power of manipulation. With paintings, not to appreciate is simply not to enjoy. Not so with music, for although it may require musical knowledge to enter into the higher or more subtle beauties of a composition, and though the mysterious harmonies of Chopin and Schuman are as great a perplexity to the uninitiated as the higher beauties of painting, yet there is something even in the finest symphonies which all can like, passages which have tune as it is called, whereas pictures, such as "Peter the Martyr," "The Miracle of St Mark," and Tintoretto's "Paradiso," so much admired by artists, present no attraction at all to the uninformed eye.

And here we would protest against popularity being considered at all a test of the grandeur of an art. Surely no one would say that the genius of Milton or Shakespeare is tested or proved by the universal admiration they now elicit, the fact being, that what is admired in these authors, is not that for which they are pre-eminent, but that which they have in common with many inferior poets, and it is the same with all the fine arts.

Another reason why music is more generally liked, may be that the great works can be studied at home, and the ear becomes educated; also it becomes familiarized with certain kinds of music, although not the best, from the street music, however indifferent, and from hearing music in churches. If there was as much conscious and unconscious training with regard to the fine arts, we do not know what might be the result in point of popularity.

Paintings were formerly used in churches as a vehicle of religious training; although not now required for that purpose, it is almost a pity that they should not have a place in our churches as well as music; as a decoration, one would think that they might be as harmless as the carved capital of a pillar. The objection to them at the

time of the Reformation was, the fear that pictures and statues might again become objects of adoration; but it would be rather difficult now even to fancy an honest Scotch wife worshipping a picture. We might trust to the advanced education of our day, being a barrier to all such delusions, particularly if the ministers keep true to the principles and teaching of the reformed faith.

Another barrier to progress in judging of art is, that people are not aware how much cultivation it requires, and how much taste can be developed. It is generally acknowledged that repetition is required for becoming acquainted with and liking certain pieces of music, but it is often overlooked, that it is also needed for understanding paintings. People are apt to give a hurried glance, and then turn away, thinking that there is nothing to admire. It is even usual for persons to show, or fancy they show, discrimination by pointing out small defects, when, in truth, the highest taste and skill are needed to discover points of excellence.

With regard to the general culture of those whose lives have been devoted to the two arts, there have been in both men endowed with various gifts. Mendelssohn, among musicians, may be named, but some painters are pre-eminent, and there is a greater number of supremely intellectual minds to be found in their ranks. M. Angelo was an engineer, a poet, and an architect, and Leonardo da Vinci was the most accomplished man of his day. He excelled in geometry, poetry, and physical science. Rubens also owed his high position not only to his artistic abilities, but to his being a most successful diplomatist; and the Infanta Isabella, in the Netherlands, as well as Charles I. of England, found him a most valuable councillor in his character of ambassador.

We will conclude by remarking that a great interest attaches to the art of painting from its antiquity. There may be extant fragments of ancient music, but they are chiefly curiosities. The oldest music we can make use of belongs to the end of the seventeenth century, while all the best music belongs to the last century and beginning of this; but painting is much older. Without going back with Vasari to the beginning of the world, and to Adam, who, he says, was the first model, we may recall to mind that the most magnificent specimens of painting were produced in the fifteenth century, the schools of Raphael and Michael Angelo being quite unrivalled even now.

The antiquity of sculpture is still more striking. To say nothing of Greek remains, there is in this city a bust which is 1800 years old—the bust of Antonia Augusta the niece of the Emperor Augustus; its age alone would make it interesting, but it is also a charming specimen of the art, superior to anything of modern date, and full of what it is so difficult to give—repose. ELISE.

Lines written for a Game.

The Noun—Tree *The Question*—Are you afraid of ghosts?

WHAT kind of ghosts? the ghosts of days
Departed with their summer rays?
I fear not these, some are so dear,
Reflected back I cannot fear.

But you, perhaps, mean ghosts like those
That Mr Home, in sober prose,
Has told us of, and bids us see,
Surrounding house and field and tree.

Well, these I do not think I fear.
If they are good they are welcome here.
But you, perhaps, think this a fable,
And scorn to turn a single table. E. H. S.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

PART I.

THE old Norman farm, which had been sleepy enough all the hot summer day, was waking up now in the cooler evening hour. The horses were coming slowly back from their day's work, their bell-hung harness jingling gaily, and some last gatherings from the hay-fields filling the long carts. For the Normandy summer was at its height; the sky was of that pure, clear tint which, slightly veiled as it is, lets the eye roam into further depths than the intense blue of more southern lands. The sea showed as

a narrow line of glittering silver beyond the sunny fields outside the farm, which from without, like many in Normandy, seemed nothing but a thick wood of four or five acres, enclosed by a hedge seven feet high, one mass of tangled bramble, clematis, and briony. Let us pass, as I have often done, the opening under the trees, and we find there is an orchard, rich in promise of fruit, where cows rest on the shady turf; old stone buildings, turreted and picturesque, huge barns with enormous thatched roofs almost touching the ground, as if they had pulled broad brimmed hats right over their faces, noble trees everywhere, and in the middle a pool of water where the ducks float happily, reflecting buildings and branches and a bit of sky. But this is long ago—thirty or forty years ago—that Mademosielle Gabrielle is sitting dreamily on the lowest of the flight of steps that reaches the arched door in the second story, while all the little world around her is astir. Her uncle Gaspard, and her aunt Marie Talbot are both busy with the returning hinds, and the preparations for supper; for though from time immemorial their family has inhabited the lands adjoining, and been fairly prosperous, it has never been ennobled, but furnished good store of curès, notarys, marayeurs or fish dealers, and sea-captains *au long cours*,—that is of the vessels that go far to sea. Gabrielle was not of a nature to dream about nothing, so we may be sure her reverie has a cause; her handsome brown face is full of energy and decision; her bright, dark eyes have a flash in them which hints of temper, but the whole countenance is unclouded, open, and kindly, and speaks of never a sorrow, and hardly a care. But now the light flashes back into it, as two men pass under the leafy portal from the evening sunshine into the shadow of the wood; her cousin, Michel Talbot, no less a person than syndic of the district, and Monsieur Raoul Wachter, the young doctor of the neighbouring fishing village of Valmont, but a native of Alsace. Michel was a common-place looking man of forty, closely shaved, precisely dressed, with a sordid face, big cheeks, and large red ears. Gabrielle gave him but a careless greeting, but rose with a deeper colour on her bright cheeks, aware of the young doctor, who also, with mantling colour, said, "If it is not too late for Mademoiselle to fulfil her promise to show me the Fontaine des Sirenes, what an evening this would be for it." Now Raoul had fair longish hair

marked regular features if somewhat attenuated, large beseeching eyes, and an air of earnestness and seriousness, far more German than French, what wonder that Mademoiselle, who contrasted with him in every respect, should assent at once, and disregarding the black looks of Michel saunter out into the open fields with her lover, for though as yet undeclared it needed no prophet to foretell what was coming Happy for Gabrielle that she wore the costume of the country then far more general than now, so she did not need the hideous hat or coal-scuttle bonnet that disfigured the fashionable young ladies of the day So they wandered on a point of the sea-shore about three miles distant Here, by a steep descent, they clambered down the cliffs and stood, not long after sunset close to the little wavelets which rolled in, tinged with pink and purple by the evening sky, but flecking in silver flashes on the deep olive and red-brown sea weeds that edged the shore. And here was the mermaid's fountain but how describe that scene? The chalk cliff rose behind to at least 300 feet of perpendicular height the pure white surface growing shadowy in the twilight But in one place a great rich, dark green velvet curtain seemed to hang from the cliff it was a bed or cushion of greenest moss in level it purled and rippled constantly a silvery shower of water never even in little streamlets but in separate pearly drops, catching the evening light, as if the whole dark green canopy was glittering with a shower of diamonds The pure water collected beneath, in a little pool, and then rippled down to the shore, whence a few rough steps had been cut in the rocks to give readier access to the spring Out at sea, just beyond low water mark, stood a great column of chalk 200 feet high but only a few feet across, a habitation of sea-birds, who perched in every ledge or flew round and round with unwearied wings and shrill cries, the only sound that broke the stillness It was a place of exquisite witchery, and it would have been easy to fancy the mermaids rising from the deep sea waves, and exchanging strange confidences with the nymph of the diamond fountain. But that was not the story of the place.

"And so Gabrielle"—it was Raoul and Gabrielle now, the words which knit lives together had been spoken—"and so this is an unlucky place. It is too lovely for that."

"Unlucky only to young men, to no one else," said

Gabrielle. "I hope it is not going to be unlucky to you; perhaps you have got charmed by a witch here—who knows?"

"Who knows? I know for me it is the most blessed and fortunate of all places, the earthly paradise," and more such nonsense; "but how about that other young man, Gabrielle?"

"You should say young *men*," said Gabrielle solemnly, "the first one I believe did fall in love with a mermaid, and they quarrelled and he forsook her; but one night she rose up and killed him, and then repented,—ah. so bitterly, and dashed herself off the cliff there, hoping to die; but she could not, only she flung herself into the fountain, and drops away in perpetual tears,—as you see."

"She dashed herself to pieces, *en effet*," said Raoul; "let us hope she can do no more mischief."

"Ah, but she can,—since then several young men have actually vanished from here; she or her sisters drag them down they say; I do believe there is something queer about the place, so mind you don't come here without me to take care of you."

"I don't wish to go anywhere without you to take care of me, that only is certain," said Raoul, with much more to the same effect, so that it was not till night had come and the starlight glimmered on the water that they wended their way back, and announced their engagement at the farm. This was considered quite suitable, and highly approved of. Raoul, indeed, was a stranger, who had only been some months in the district,—an orphan, whose parents had belonged to Alsace; but he had a good practice, and was of a social grade somewhat higher than Gabrielle, who, on her part, could contribute numerous cousins and friends to their society, and a handsome *dôt* to the *ménage*. Every one was pleased, unless perhaps Michel, and he might have had his reasons, purely personal and selfish. Raoul and Gabrielle seemed as fortunate in their loves as in everything else, not a cloud flecked their sky, unless indeed it was of their own bringing. Raoul had some ideas of going to push his fortune in a less quiet country, of moving to Rouen, to Paris even, of doing wonders in his profession, while to Gabrielle any proposal to leave her beloved sea, or to go beyond the sound of the bells of her own parish church was simply detestable. Nor did the enthusiasm of having given her life and heart, as she said, to Raoul, carry her

off her feet in those minor matters in which he wished her to please him. And so such conversations as these would arise. When, a few weeks later, the carts were loading in the harvest fields—

"What a land is this," said Gabrielle, "a land to live and die in."

"And leave no trace behind," said Raoul,—"no, no; elsewhere one may win something to make the land happier you see—advance science."

"Advance Dr Wachter,—that is to say" laughed Gabrielle. "What, can one be more than happy? What is the use of being rich and celebrated in a dull street, looking out on roofs, and cats, and bourgeois?"

"Never mind—how you will delight in our little lodging au quatrième. When you are Madame Wachter, you will have flowers in the window—an ivy plant trained—"

"A fig for your ivy. I won't go to the little lodging au quatrième. Am I a pigeon—I?"

"Quite the contrary, but wives must go with their husbands."

"Not if husbands go to the bad."

"No ifs in the matter."

"Well, then, *wives* may, but I never shall."

And again—

"What corn! None such to be seen in Alsace."

"Why the Alsace corn is twice the height."

"Oh, I daresay—little boys always think everything high."

"Little girls, who have seen nothing, can't judge."

"Well, thank heaven, I don't desire to see a better land than this."

"Why, are you like the church weather-cock, Gabrielle? Because you are always in the same spot, yet always changing."

"If you like me you must like my weather-cock too."

"I like both so well, that if you are such inseparables, I shall carry you both to Paris."

"Neither the one nor the other—the steeple as soon as I," and away she would go with a peal of laughter, meeting him again next time with an insouciance and good humour she did not always find in Raoul. "Tiens, il est ombrageux, ton futur," said her companions, "ce serait un mari rigouroux ça, you are bold to take him." One frequent dispute was about the Sunday after-Vesper

dance, which Gabrielle loved to join, and to which Raoul had a real aversion. "Dancing do you call it, plunging up and down separately like cart horses; and as for the music, no wonder the young men here run after the siren; to hear good singing for once in their lives, is enough to make them crazy with delight."

The harvest being now in, an evening in early autumn was appointed for a dance at the farm, either in the great barn, or under the shadowy trees. The clarionettes and fiddles were come, and the girls were clustered about the barn doors, like so much poultry—as the lads saucily remarked. They certainly looked as trim as birds, in their neat summer attire, even when not pretty; some seated in groups, some standing reflected in the quiet pool. Raoul came, as in duty bound, to ask his betrothed for the first dance under the trees, after which he did not wish her to dance with the peasants now entering the barn; he wished to steal off with her to the Mermaid's Fountain, and there present her with the little gold watch that was burning a hole in his pocket. Gabrielle and he had a blissful dance, and then he whispered his proposal, but she was up in arms. Never had such a thing been heard of—what! lose all the dancing, and when perhaps, it was one of the last dances she would have in her "*pays*," the first time she had suggested the possibility of her leaving it; a hint which should not have been lost on Raoul. He might have gathered hence how much of her contradictiousness was mere froth and talk.

"But do come, Gabrielle, we shall never be missed, the evening is lovely, just such a night as when first you said you loved me."

"On just such a night I would say I loved you no more, if I were dragged down there," said Gabrielle; "go if you must, and ask the mermaids to amuse you, while I have my dance."

"You love your dance better than you love me."

"Both together best," she answered, with a sunny smile, "come, then."

Raoul all but yielded, but some evil fate impelled him to say, "The dance afterwards—but the walk first—will you not my own—I wish it so much?"

"Do you hear me say, no," with a little stamp. This was said out loud, and even as she spoke, other girls ran up. They seized Gabrielle's hands and swept with

her into the barn, where, forming a circle, they swung round and round slowly, while one girl sang a verse, then swiftly, while shrieking out a shrill chorus. The verses, mocking rhymes, were partly improvised, and all not dancing paused to listen while they sang.

Vous autres habitans des villes
Ah! ne vous estimez pas tant;
Vous nous traitez tous d'imbéciles
Je pourrai bien vous en dire autant.
Chorus—Cu tambour violon flutiau
Ca vous enlève, ya rien si biau!

S'l y tonne, y grêle y pleut
Pour ça quittra-t on l' assemblée?
Si les bourgeois sont ennuyeux
Dansons quest ce que ça nous fait.
Chorus—Cu tambour violon flutiau
Ca vous enlève, ya rien si biau!

Many eyes glanced meaningly at Raoul as they whirled past, and his face darkened as he looked. The delicate ear for music he had inherited from his German ancestors was as much offended by the screeching song as was his taste by the rustic hilarity that seemed to have infected his chosen lady. The girls laughed as they saw him turn away and saunter out of the barn, but Gabrielle soon disengaged herself, and stood by the unglazed window looking out into the twilight. She was ready now to talk to Raoul as he wished. Why did he come to the window outside, and instead of the tender little word that would have lured her away with him, said, "I leave you, then, Mademoiselle, to the amusements you prefer; à demain." "Mes amitiés à la Sirene, et bon soir Monsieur," said Gabrielle gaily, but she felt that the pleasure of the evening was over for her. To-morrow I shall be so sweet, and make up for it all, she said to herself. Ah! how many good and pleasant things are to happen on that to-morrow which never comes. The day after comes always however, and Gabrielle hoped for an early visit from Raoul. She would be a little difficult at first, for had he not behaved most rudely? But she would soon forgive him, and that very evening they would walk to the fontaine.

By the afternoon, she was prepared to give him a most cordial reception; but when evening had come, and the men were coming home to supper, with no mention of him, she would have flown into his arms. A curious kind of dull ache came into her heart, with an inclination to start, quite new sensations to her, but destined to become more familiar.

"Tiens," said Uncle Gaspard, "ton futur, where is he? not coming to-night?

"He has perhaps been called to a distance for a consultation," said Aunt Marie.

"Maybe," added Michel, who had joined the party, "I at least have not seen him all day. Paul, the chemist, saw him going down to the fontaine last night when he was on his way home from the dance. Look you, Gabrielle, you should not let your man expose himself to the wiles of the siren. How if she were to take a fancy to him and lure him away. You have no rival on dry land, no doubt; but in the sea! ah! who knows. Then he is a smart fellow, the doctor, too grand for us simple country folks. I thought he was on a high horse last night. Perhaps he has ridden away on it."

"He is too good for you all," said Gabrielle, hardly restraining her tears. This was becoming unendurable. Why had she let the girls behave so wildly; ah! why had she joined them herself? Bed-time came at last, and, at least for the night, nothing more could happen, but the heart sickness was worse next day, when after breakfast no Raoul came and no news, nothing at all seemed to happen. She was too shy openly to inquire after him, it would seem to announce a quarrel; but she made an excuse to drive down to the village a mile off, and asked incidentally at the little chemist's shop, if Monsieur Wachter had been there that morning. "No, nor yesterday," said Paul the chemist, "I have not seen him since your *assemblée*." Gabrielle turned away with a sick heart; something prevented her from asking further. But she went back to the farm, half hoping to find him there. No, there was no one, and the day passed heavily on. Towards evening she sat on the door step unable to settle to any employment. "Had you and Raoul a quarrel when you parted," said her aunt, as she passed and looked at her. "No," said Gabrielle, faintly, "we had a little discussion, but it was nothing." As she spoke, a young peasant woman came up the path. With a sudden shrinking, she recognized Madame Lecœur, Raoul's landlady.

"I came to ask if here they knew where M. Raoul is—but, good heavens! Mademoiselle, don't look like that; he may be detained by some bad case."

"When did he go?" gasped Gabrielle.

"He has not been at home since your dance. What,

then,—a gentleman has his affairs,—he can't always tell when he will come back."

"Aunt!" said Gabrielle, "come with me to the Mermaids' Fountain, for I must go there;" and she started off across the fields. Her aunt sent some of the people after her; they had to run; she went slower herself. When she arrived, Gabrielle had already for some time been pacing up and down between the cliff and the sea, asking them hopeless questions; for all was as still and quiet as though no human heart were throbbing so wildly near. There was no one—nothing; but soon after her aunt got down, Gabrielle standing by the fountain while the pearly drops fell thick and unheeded on her, stirred a stone with her foot, and gave a shrill scream. There was something; a little packet addressed to herself. It was damp but legible, and in his hand. She opened it trembling; there was no writing inside, only a little gold watch, and within the lid, which flew open, the inscription *A ma bien aimée.* The poor girl sat looking at it with fixed eyes. "It is not going," she said, "but the fountain is forever weeping. Oh! tell me, tell me what you know," she said, wildly, to the spectators. But they knew nothing; nothing then, and nothing afterwards.

That evening Gabrielle was carried home; but she was not ill the following day. She had a resolute spirit; and, though her blitheness was gone, she was softer and sweeter, The country-people said, here was indeed a proof of the truth of the legend of the Siren, and avoided the place after nightfall. Some said Raoul had committed suicide. "But no," said Gabrielle, with complete confidence, "that was not his nature; and, besides, there was no such quarrel. No, he saw it would not do, and left the little souvenir where he knew I should find it. If ever he comes back, I shall be more worthy of him." But he never did come back, though the years rolled on and on and on.

E. J. O.

(To be continued.)

SUBJECTS OF DEBATE

PROPOSED FOR THE

WINTER AND SUMMER TERMS OF 1873-4

1 Is perfect politeness always compatible with perfect sincerity? * *

2 Is the will free? * *

3 Is the tutorial element to be encouraged in the education of elder students in the higher branches?

4 Are excursions in the High Alps to be commended?

5 Should the Swedish Licence Law be introduced into Great Britain? *

6 Are the writings of the Lake Poets consistent with the true principles of poetry?

7 Ought a promise extorted by unlawful means to be performed?

8 Does Berkeley's component of matter leave no residuum behind phenomena?

9 Does the Norman type of mind predominate over the Saxon in our modern literature?

10 Should Ancient Languages be studied before Modern?

11 Is patriotism radically a virtue? *

12 Is it the duty of Women to pay great attention to Dress?

13 Is Darwin's system satisfactory?

14 Are the beauties of Spenser superior as a whole to those of Chaucer?

15 Does national character depend more on physical than on moral causes?

16 Is George Eliot the greatest novelist of this reign?

*** Members willing to undertake Debates, are invited to communicate with

THE PRESIDENTS OF DEBATE,

51 *Lauriston Place, Edinburgh.*

Those at a distance may send papers to be read at the Monthly Meetings.

N B—Both sides of those Debates marked * *, and one of those marked *, have been already engaged.

A Prize is offered for the best Poem appearing in *The Attempt* during the months of July, August, and September.

Milla Farres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY FIVE.

CHAPTER XI

ENLIGHTENMENT

In a few moments more the flicker of old Sandy's lanthorn coming up the hill towards them announced to Alaster that help was at hand. They laid the insensible girl gently in the extemporised litter which old Mrs M'Pherson's skill had arranged for her young mistress. Sandy and Duncan carried it carefully over the rugged mountain path and Alaster walked a few paces before them with the lanthorn to light their way. Many feelings were struggling in Alaster's breast as he walked silently along leading the little procession. A joy unspeakable that Barbara was yet alive mingled with an intolerable fear that after all her hurts might prove fatal and a strange vague terror at the discovery he had that night made of the nature of his own feelings towards her all struggled together within him in that silent walk. Old Elspet's face was peering anxiously into the darkness from the kitchen window at Milla Farres. At the first gleam of their lanthorns coming up the avenue she rushed to the door and out into the night.

'Have ye fand her, have ye fand her?" she gasped, then catching sight of the litter she burst into a wild wail. Nancy utterly worn out by the fatigue and grief and excitement of the day, had dozed for a moment on the sofa, but the wild wail that burst from Elspet awoke her in a moment, and painfully dragging her sprained ankle, which had now swelled to an enormous size, she too stood at the door as Alaster came up the steps. A wild shriek broke from her as she saw the litter, and she staggered forward towards it holding out both her hands. By this time Alaster was close at hand, and passing his arm round her waist he drew her back into the entrance hall.

"Don't be frightened, Nancy," he said, "it's all well, she is alive."

"Alive!" exclaimed Nancy, "but is she hurt? Oh, what's the matter? I must go to her—don't hinder me, Alaster;" and shaking herself free of his arm she dragged

herself to the sofa, where by this time they had laid Barbara. Old Elspet was standing by wringing her hands, and lamenting alternately in Gaelic and English, and Nancy threw herself upon her sister's breast.

"Elspet, be quiet, do you wish to kill your mistress?" said Alaster, with a sternness at which he himself wondered. "Go and get hot-water bottles to put all round her at once, she is benumbed with cold, and send Duncan for the nearest doctor. Nancy," he added gently, but firmly. "You must control yourself, you will harm your sister. My poor child," he added, raising her tenderly, "you are not fit for this, let me carry you to your room, your ankle will be worse in the morning."

"Do you think I would leave Barbara?" she said indignantly; "I won't leave this room to-night."

"Very well, dear, let me lay you on the other sofa, you will see everything done with your own eyes."

She allowed him to place her on the sofa, for the pain of her sprained ankle was very great; but the instant old Elspet reappeared with the hot-water bottles Nancy was on her feet again, placing them round her sister. Alaster only smiled, he saw that interference was useless. By and bye the heat began to bring a glow into the cold limbs, and a faint colour into the deathlike face. They all hung over her in breathless silence. At last the blue eyes opened widely, and looking round on them all Barbara said,—

"Alaster, Nancy, Elspet," and shut her eyes again with a sweet smile.

"The Lord be thankit!" exclaimed old Elspet.

Nancy burst into tears, and taking up her sister's hand covered it with kisses. Alaster only bent his head lower over his folded arms. At the sound of his mistress' voice old Oscar, who had hidden himself under the sofa on which they had laid Barbara, crept out, and laid his head lovingly on her knee, looking up in the white face with great soft longing eyes. Barbara seemed to feel his caress, for, without opening her eyes, she laid her hand softly on his rough head.

By and bye Duncan returned with the doctor, who pronounced Barbara's injuries to consist of a dislocation of the right shoulder, and the general benumbing effects of her exposure on the mountain for so many hours in an insensible state. He set the shoulder, and had her conveyed to bed. He attended also to Nancy's sprained

ankle, and ordered a bed to be made up for her in her sister's room, as she absolutely refused to leave her for a moment. And giving Elspet all directions for his two patients, and promising to call again to-morrow, he was leaving the house, when Alaster arrested him in the hall.

"She will live?" he said hoarsely.

"Live?" said the doctor, who knew Alaster's relation to the family, and at once concluded that his anxiety was about his bride, "did you ever hear of any one dying of a sprained ankle? it won't even put your marriage off a week, take my word for it."

"No, no," said Alaster, impatiently, "not Nancy,—Barbara." The doctor looked up in astonishment at his wild, haggard face.

"Yes, yes, she'll live too, though I won't promise she'll be well so soon; a dislocated shoulder, and a night like this on Benvorlish are no joke; but she's a grand constitution—a grand constitution—there are no fears for her."

"Thank God!" muttered Alaster, the tears coming into his eyes. The doctor looked at him keenly. "Ay, thank God," he said, "it might have been a serious business."

When the doctor was gone, Alaster went back into the now empty hall, and sat down in the great arm chair beside the fire. Old Oscar came up to him wagging his tail, and whinging to be taken notice of, and to offer his mute sympathy in the family joy. Alaster laid his hand on the faithful creature's head, and sat silently gazing into the fire. All was silent now overhead; he could hear the faintest movement in the girls' room, for it was directly above the hall, and now and then he heard the faint creaking of Elspet's shoes as she moved about the room attending to the two invalids. Many thoughts chased each other through Alaster's mind as he sat there. Now that all immediate cause of anxiety about Barbara's state was over, his mind sprang back with a sudden bound to the discovery he had that night made, as to his own feelings towards the sister of his promised bride. Till to-night he had never realized how it was with him. They had all three been together, and he had been very happy, and he had not cared to dissect his happiness; indeed, he had persistently shut his eyes and declined to do so, when sometimes an unwelcome comparison would arise in his mind between the sisters. But now, with the memory fresh in his mind of that terrible agony of suspense and anxiety, when it had seemed to him that

without Barbara the world would be to him nothing but a barren wilderness, he could shut his eyes no longer. He had known Nancy first,—her fresh, innocent, bright girlhood had attracted him, and he had fancied that attraction, love; but he knew better now, and he recognized, with a terrible vividness that left no room for doubt, that the former love had been but a pleasant dream, a faint forerunner of the great reality, to which at last his whole nature had awaked. But what was he to do? He was Nancy's plighted husband, how could he turn from her, and say to Barbara, "I asked Nancy to be my wife in a mistake, it is *you* whom I love,"—and yet that was the truth. He knew that by the world's code of honour he was bound to Nancy, but was it true at God's altar to promise his heart to one woman, while he knew in his inmost soul that it belonged to another? Was it true to himself, to Barbara, or to Nancy? What was true and what was false? What was right and what was wrong? —he could not tell. He sat there, rapid thoughts succeeding each other in his mind, as hour after hour struck on the old clock on the stairs. And it was only when the starlight had quite faded, and the morning twilight had almost broadened into day, and he heard Elspet softly opening the shutters in the sick room, that he rose from the old arm chair, chilled and weary, and went to the room prepared for him upstairs.

CHAPTER XII.

ALASTER'S FLIGHT.

BARBARA'S convalescence was quicker than the country doctor had dared to expect. Blest by nature with a constitution peculiarly vigorous, and with the elastic power of youth and happiness, she soon threw off the effects of her dislocated shoulder and night's exposure, and in ten days was carried carefully down stairs by old Elspet and Alaster, and laid on the sofa in the hall. Nancy's sprain had proved also less severe than they at first feared, and she was able by this time to walk about again, a little lamely, perhaps, but without any painful exertion. During Barbara's illness, Alaster had been constantly running backwards and forwards between Carrick Castle and Milla Forres; now bringing grapes from Lady Macdonald's hot-houses, now with stirring news of Prince Charlie's army in the south. He seemed to be

always on the move, always busy about something to please the two girls at Milla Forres, but he was *so* busy in this self-imposed task of his, that somehow Nancy did not see very much of him. Barbara was confined to her room, and Nancy was much there, and he was always occupied getting things to please them; so Nancy accounted for it to herself, when she missed the old constant intercourse. Yet she *did* miss it sometimes, though it never occurred to her that the want of it could be owing to any fault of Alaster's. When she did see him, he was always the old, kind, gentle Alaster, and Nancy was quite satisfied. Confined to her own room, and only hearing of his kind attentions, Barbara too never dreamed of any change in him, or of any cloud hanging over her sister's happiness. She seemed to remember, as in some far away dream, some passionate words that had fallen on her ear, and passionate kisses that had been showered upon her brow the night she was lost on Benvorlish, and the first time she had seen Alaster afterwards (on the evening on which the doctor first allowed her to be lifted to the couch in her room), the remembrance of what she deemed a vision of her delirium, came upon her so vividly, that she was conscious that the hand she put out to meet his was trembling; but Alaster was as quiet, as gentle, as brotherly as ever, and the momentary tremor passed quickly away, and she concluded that what she *seemed* to remember was only a phantasy born of her feverish brain. There was one pair of sharp eyes, however, that was watching quietly, and one faithful heart that was already beginning to quake at the "cloud no bigger than a man's hand," that had appeared on her nurseling's horizon. Old Elspet noticed how rarely Alaster seemed to find time for a lover's walk or a lover's talk with Nancy; she had noticed, too, his wild haggard face the night Barbara was lost. She said nothing to anyone of her fears, but her kind old face looked often very grave, and she would shake her gray head, and mutter to herself, "Aye, aye, I kent our folk had the second sicht—it's the beginning o' the shadow, it's the beginning o' the shadow."

The first night that Barbara was able to be carried down stairs, was one all three long remembered. They treated it as a sort of jubilee. Elspet had prepared a sumptuous repast, after the simple fashion of those days, to celebrate the occasion, and all three seemed to throw themselves without restraint into the delight of the

passing hour. Alaster, in particular, seemed to have thrown all care to the winds, and to be bent on nothing but the simple enjoyment of the present. The hours flew along, winged with song and laughter, and all three were startled when old Elspet put in her head at the door with the unwelcome reminder, that it "was ten chappit o' the clock, an' the doctor said as Miss Barbara was to be i' bed by nine." When Barbara had been safely carried upstairs, as Alaster was bidding good-night, he said abruptly,—

"Good-night, Barbara, and good-bye, I'm going away to-morrow."

"Going away! where on earth are you going to?" exclaimed both the girls in surprise."

"To Castle Ronald, I have business there," he said.

"Dear me, your business is very sudden, Alaster," said Nancy; "you never said a word about it before—must you *really* go?"

"I must, indeed," he said, "the business is urgent, my father needs me at once. Good-bye again, Barbara," he said hastily, moving to the door, as if he desired no further questioning.

"When will you be back then, Alaster?" said Nancy, as she accompanied him down stairs;

"I can hardly say, dear," he said; "I will write and let you know," and gravely kissing her, he left the house, and disappeared in the darkness down the avenue.

Nancy stood watching his retreating form till it was lost in the darkness, then she turned back into the lighted hall with a half sigh, and a look of anxiety on her face. Something in his abrupt leave taking, and his grave gentle kiss, troubled her, she knew not why. As she turned, she met old Elspet's eyes watching her anxiously. The instant their eyes met the old woman dropped hers, and turned away. Nancy went back to the hall, and old Elspet hurried to her own little den down stairs, and bolting herself in, sat down on a low stool by her bedside, and burying her face in the bedclothes, cried as if her heart would break. Alaster, on his part, walked swiftly away into the darkness without, and as he walked, the thought was busy within him, that the darkness he was going into was more than mere outward darkness, that he too was walking away into the night, and knew not whither he was going. During Barbara's illness he had felt comparatively at ease; it had seemed so impossible

to leavé Milla Forres while she was ill, so absolutely incumbent on him to remain and do all he could to lighten her sufferings, that he had occupied himself entirely with the present, and resolutely banished from his mind all thought and care for the future. But now that Barbara was able again to be down stairs, he felt that he must come to some decision as to his future course; he dared not let things drift on in their own way as they had been doing hitherto, and he felt as if he must absolutely go away for a while, and look at his life from a distance, as it were, and note its bearings, if he did not wish to drift on to absolute shipwreck—a shipwreck which, he realised with a shudder, must inevitably include more than himself. He had therefore resolved that, as soon as Barbara was convalescent, he would go home to Perthshire, and think the matter quietly out for himself. When the doctor had announced to him yesterday, with an air of triumph, that Barbara might be taken down to the hall on the following day, he could scarcely repress a sigh, conscious, as he was, how unsuited it would seem to the occasion in the doctor's eyes. He *did* repress it, however, but still he listened to the permission with such an air of gravity, that the good doctor was fairly puzzled.

"What ails the man?" soliloquised the doctor, as he jogged quietly home on his old grey cob. "I'm sure he seemed fond enough of her the night they brought her home from Benvorlish, and now he seems hardly to have a smile to give to her recovery." The doctor himself was greatly elated at his patient's rapid progress, which made him naturally the more impatient of Alaster's seeming indifference. Poor fellow! far away as he felt himself from Barbara, and utterly hopeless as he knew any such feeling on his part towards her must be, the utter hopelessness of his attachment had not prevented him from loving her. He knew well enough that he might just as well have loved "some bright particular star, and hoped to wed it." But when did hopelessness extinguish love? So, as he jogged home quietly on his grey pony, the doctor's thoughts were anything but charitable towards Alaster for his apparent insensibility. If he had known the reason he could have understood it better.

Next morning Alaster set out, as he proposed, to his Perthshire home. Castle Ronald lay in one of the most romantic straths of that romantic county. It was an old castellated mansion, with walls six feet thick, an old moat, and

ivy-covered towers, standing on a wooded slope, almost buried in gigantic fir trees, with the Tay flowing at its feet. A grand old place, but in great disrepair, for, like most of the Jacobite families of any pretension, the Macdonalds had expended their money, as well as their blood, in the Prince's cause. Just now, Castle Ronald was quite deserted, for Alaster's father, like Colonel Forbes, had gone to join the rendezvous of the Prince's troops at Edinburgh. Its solitude was just what Alaster wanted, however. At this crisis of his life, he felt that he must be alone, and where could he better grapple with his fate than amongst the old woods, that seemed to have known and loved him from a child?

CHAPTER XIII.

Peggy's Legacy.

Left to themselves in the still old house at Milla Forres for the first time after the excitement of the last few months, both Barbara and Nancy found the days hang at first rather heavy on their hands. To Nancy, it seemed quite natural that she should miss Alaster sorely, and she gave way without any compunctions to the feeling of dullness and vacuity that seemed to have come over her life. Those were not the days of the penny post, or of the free-and-easy letter-writing which it has produced, so the lover's letters were very rare, and when they *were* written, very formal; for a letter was looked upon then as a grave and formidable undertaking. Barbara, on the contrary, was angry at herself for feeling the blank made by Alaster's absence in the way that she did. She tried to persuade herself that it was the weakness left behind by her illness that weighed upon her spirits and made her feel so disinclined for any kind of exertion, and so predisposed to pass the long evenings in indolent dreaming in an arm-chair over the pleasant days of the last three months. Conscientious as usual, she went through all her household duties as regularly as before; the only difference was, that now, instead of setting to work at some reading or painting, or starting off for a brisk walk, or some little kindly visit, in her hours of leisure, she generally found herself curled up either in the big chair by the fire-place, or, if the day were bright, on some mossy bank by the burn-side, busy only in weaving day dreams. Very happy the dreams were, so happy that she sometimes felt as if

she did not miss Alaster at all, and almost wondered to hear Nancy mourning for his departure. About a fortnight had passed in this way, when one morning, just as Barbara had completed her orders to Elspet, a little bare-footed Highland boy knocked at the back door. Elspet went to open it, leaving Barbara standing before the kitchen fire. In a minute or so she returned with [illegible] standing in her kind gray eyes

"Hoch sirs! Miss Barbara, she said, "here's [illegible], the doctor's laddie comin runnin frae the doctor's to [illegible] that auld Peggy's had a stroke an' they're no thinkin' she'll leeve mony hours an she's fain to see ye and Miss Nancy."

Oh Elspet, it can't be —dear old Peggy dying! I cannot run with Miller Ferris with us her, she seems a bit of it. I'll go to her at once she said then turning to the boy, who stood with his ragged cap in his hand, she said, "Did the doctor say there was anything she would be the better of Donald?" The boy tugged the front lock of his red shock hair respectfully, as he answered,—

Ay my leddy, the doctor said gin ye had a drap o' brandy an a wee pickle mustard i the hoos, I was to ask ye to bring them wi ye.

"You had better take them Donald, you'll run faster than we can walk Elspet gave him some of the French brandy my father brought over, and some mustard; and don't forget to give him a jelly piece for himself, while I go for Nancy. Run as fast as you can, Donald, and tell Peggy, Miss Nancy and I will be there immediately."

"I'll do that, my leddy," said the boy, with another tug at his red pow.

Barbara went upstairs sadly and thoughtfully. Old Peggy had always seemed so much an inseparable part of her life, that, old as she was, it had hardly ever occurred to her that, in all probability, the time was short in which she might still visit her, and read to her, and hear her wise, motherly counsels on the Sabbath evenings; and somehow the idea that perhaps she should never do so again came upon her with a great shock, as if one of the foundations of her own life had given way, as if it were the beginning of the end, and no one knew what might happen next. Except in the far-away dream-like memory of her father, death had never come close to Barbara in the [illegible] she had or dear to her, and the first [illegible] messenger seemed to her to shake [illegible] the strongest. Is it not so with each of us? [illegible] the dreadful truth, that death is

in very deed to this that the blasphemed surroundings which had sprung up in little would darken into eternal? Does it not give us grounds for confidence in everything as if the whole system of the universe were shaken to its centre

Barbara found Nancy sitting spinning in her room Nancy was very busy just now with her spinning all day long at the time-honoured thread fingers which had been handed down from mother to daughter for many generations and which each new bride felt it a point of honour to take with her to her new home

"Oh, Nancy she said she started all at once as Donald to tell us that Lilly was dying she sent for us to see us, come away now!

"Old Peggy dying Barbara!" cried Nancy starting up, "oh, do not say that it cannot be true she was quite well on Sunday," and Nancy clung to her sister's dress with a terrified expression in her own eyes

"I'm afraid it is true dear said Barbara gently Do not cry Nancy we must go to her and she reached down her sister's bonnet from the peg on which it was hanging, and tied it on for Nancy's trembling fingers refused to do it for herself then putting on her own bonnet, she drew Nancy's hand through her arm and led her down stairs

Very silently the sisters passed through the glen The day was bleak and windy for the autumn had faded into winter, and the glen looked bare and desolate to their sad eyes as they walked along. By and bye they came in sight of old Peggy's house The door, which usually stood wide open was shut, as was also part of the shutters in the little window, and the sisters' hearts beat loud as they knocked, with the fear that already it was too late even to say good-bye to their old friend. Donald opened the door in answer to their knock, and as they crossed the threshold, the doctor stepped out to meet them.

"Is she alive?" said Barbara, in an awe-struck whisper.

"Yes, and quite conscious, she was wearying for your coming"

The two girls stepped noiselessly into the little room, cosy and clean as usual for old Peggy had just completed her morning's work when she was struck down by the unseen messenger. On a [illegible] the old woman was lying Her right side had been completely paralysed, and there seemed no sensation in the silent figure lying under the bedclothes except in the clear wide-open eyes that wandered from [illegible]

t an tl er f th s ar un l her bed Very cl ar and calm the ey s were tl e dimness of age seemed to have passed away fr m th m t l replaced by a quiet solemn far-seeing l k as f y s that are gazing behind the veil As th gnils cnter l that s l mn gaze gave place for a m m nt t n expressi n f int ns human affection. She m v l h r l d sh l thly t wards them, and Barbara t pp d f rward t tl l l lift l the poor, powerless, wrinkl d l n l th l thr n th l d quilt, and pressed it to l r lps l t t rs f llin p ver it as she did so For an l r t w ft r l r attr l P ggy hurl d at the power of s l l l t t l r turn l m s me measure before the girls n v l th ghl r w rls w er still nly half articulat t l p k n with gr t ff rt.

D p n t my l wn sh gasped, with long inter- v l ls f r r w rds sh felt Barbara's hot tears f llin n l r fa wh n sl st p d t kiss the cold wrinkl d thr v y l n v l t y r al th ther Sunday— Y th gh I walk—thr gh th valley— the shadow — f l th l t n r evil—f r Th u art with me'—He s will r hunn r t r auld P ggy my barn" She st pp d a while and then she saw Nancy who was standing leaning against the f t of the bed and s bbing as if her heart would break—"Nor you neither my bonny hinnie She paused a few minutes and the far-away l k came back into the quiet eyes as she said in a sol mn, p rfectly articulate voice—"'Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children;' aye, aye, the Master said that when His course was near its en', an' auld Peggy can say it too Aye, bairns, it's no for *me* ye've got to greet that's got safe to the end o' the journey, the Lord be praised that s led me a' my life lang, an' that's bringing me noo to His ain Holy Hill, it s auld Peggy that should greet for ye, puir young things, that has it's a' afore ye, but He's bring ye through,—He s bring ye through."

She stopped speaking, and lay motionless for a few minutes, then she began to croon over a verse of the old hymn, of which she was very fond—

"O God of Bethel! by whose hand
Thy people still are fed,
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led."

"Shall I sing to you, Peggy?" said Barbara.

"Aye, sing," I to the hills."

And Barbara began to sing in a low tone the triumphant words of old Scottish version of that beautiful psalm.

"I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
From whence doth come mine aid
My safety cometh from the Lord,
Who heav'n and earth hath made
Thy foot He'll not led slide, nor will
He slumber that thee keeps
Behold, He that keeps Israel
He slumbers not, nor sleeps'

"Na, na, 'He slumbers not, nor sleeps,'" muttered the old woman.

"'The moon by night thee shall not smite,
Nor yet the sun by day'

Mind that, my bairns, it'll be a' weel wi' you when ye're in His good keeping."

She seemed to doze off for a while. The doctor came and put his finger on the pulse and shook his head—he could hardly feel it beating.

"Probably she won't speak again," he said, turning to Barbara. "Miss Forbes, this is a painful place for you, would you not go home?"

But Barbara only shook her head, she could not leave till she had seen the last of her old friend. She sat down by the fire, in the old woman's low chair, and Nancy set herself on a stool at her feet, and laid her head on her sister's knee. They sat so, looking into the fire, for some time; the doctor went again to the bed-side and laid his hand on the feebly beating heart. He shook his head again sadly, and coming up to Barbara he said gently,—

"I fear I can be of no more use here, Miss Forbes. No human power can save her. I will look in again, however, when I have seen M'Lauchlan's wife, at the head of the glen. I will leave Donald, in case he can be of use;" and lifting his hat respectfully he left the cottage.

The girls sat on in the silent room, where the only sound was the regular tick of the old eight-day clock, and the faint breathing of the dying woman. About an hour passed so, and then a faint voice came from the bed,—

"Miss Barbara!"

Barbara was at the bedside in an instant, and bending low down over the old woman to catch the faint whisper that was little more than a breath. Elspet had followed her young mistresses to the cottage, for the doctor had stopped at Milla Forres on his way up the glen, to tell her that he feared the end might come before he could return, and to beg her to go to them. He could not bear to think of Barbara left there to meet death for the first time, without some friendly helper near. Poor Dr Brown! his was one of those silent untold loves, unnoticed and un-

appreciated, yet always hovering round the beloved one in unobtrusive and unremarked offices of affection; love little valued and seldom rewarded here, yet surely not altogether unregarded or unrecompensed by Him whose name is Love. Nancy held up a warning finger as Elspet entered the cottage, for she feared her entrance might disturb Peggy, so she stopped short on the threshold, just as Peggy called Barbara to her bedside.

"Miss Barbara," said Peggy again, the faint voice scarcely audible, even to the girl who leant so close over her pillow, "Will ye do ain thing for poor auld Peggy's sake whan she's gane?"

"I'll do anything in the world for you, Peggy, you know I will."

"Yes yes, my dawtie, I ken. I'se ne'er spoken to ye o' my dochter, my puir bonny Maggie, that gied astray,—the Lord forgie me,—I was ower proud, an' I couldna thole to speak aboot her, but I ken better noo, maybe the Lord 'll no disdain to let my Maggie wash his feet wi' her tears as He let the puir woman that was a sinner afore. Ye'll fin' a' the papers aboot whaur she was last scen i' the drawer i' the table, and ye'll fin' an auld stocking wi' a' the money I hae gotten at the bed heed. It 'll pay for my funeral, and maybe a wee thing mair; ye'll keep what's ower for Maggie, an' ye'll gie it her alang wi' my big Bible an' her mither's blessing. Ye'll gie me your word. Miss Barbara, as ye'll no rest till ye fin' my puir misguided bairn?"

"Yes, yes, Peggy dear, I'll give you my word."

"The Lord bless ye, my bairn. Miss Nancy," she said, feebly turning the clear eyes that were beginning now to grow dim with the dimness of death toward where Nancy sat. She came to the bedside. "Miss Nancy," she said again.

"I'm here, Peggy dear," sobbed Nancy.

"Are ye, my bonny lamb? I canna see ye, but it's a' richt, there's Ain that 'never slumbers nor sleeps,' as 'll keep ye baith like the apple o' His e'e. Guid-bye, my bairns, the Lord bless ye, an' keep ye, an' cause the licht o' His countenance to shine upon ye, an' gie ye—peace."

The last word was hardly audible, the dim eyes closed quietly, and old Peggy had entered into "peace."

JEANIE MORISON

(*To be continued.*)

Equal.

I.

He said: I would she were a pearl,
Deep hid in Ocean caves;
Light were the task to plunge beneath,
And wrest her from the waves!
I would she were a floweret rare,
Blooming 'mid peaks of snow;
Soon should I win her for my own,
And all her sweetness know.

II.

I would my love were lone or poor,
So I might give her aid;
Only not set above me there,
In light that has no shade.
My life is hers; for her sweet sake
I draw my sword of fame;
And my reward perchance will be
Her lips may breathe my name!

III.

She laid aside her robe of state,
She cast aside her golden crown,
A simple maiden clad in white,
All blushing, came she down.
She said: And if you prize that pearl,
It gleams, it shines alone for you;
And if you seek that mountain flower,
Your hand must shed the dew.

IV.

Oh, I am poor when near to you;
Your noble constancy
And stainless honour far outweigh
All homage paid to me.
The loyal heart, in silence borne,
The strong arm, faithful sure,
Shall still be held the priceless gifts—
So Love and Truth endure!

Emma.

Dissolving Views in Cheshire.

"I have
In mind the landscape, as if still in sight;
The river glides, the woods before me wave:
.
Memory, like sleep, hath powers which dreams obey,
Dreams, vivid dreams that are not fugitive;
How little that she cherishes is lost."

WORDSWORTH.

To a true Scot, there is no such moving sight in nature as a mountain. The hills are his everlasting heritage; the hereditary guardians of his historic destiny, crowned with the glories of his national liberties, and reflecting the lights and shades of his national character. Poetry and freedom have blossomed with the heather on their rugged bosoms, and religious and patriotic enthusiasm become welded in a mould of heroic action to the steadfast and consistent temper of their rocks of flint. Scottish history exhibits examples of human endurance, courage and patience, impressive as nature's own character in her grandest moods; and the noblest natural beauties of the "land of the mountain and the flood" owe their crowning charm to association with romantic adventure, traditionary spell, historic deed, or poetic idea.

A native acquaintance with these scenes of enchantment has been considered so disqualifying for wider appreciation, that the "Scot abroad" is generally assumed to be placed at a hopeless disadvantage for valuing all that is foreign to the beauties of his own land, which, on the other hand, it is the primary part of the enlightened Englishman's travelling education, to *acquire the right to say he has visited.* True, it may only have been to enjoy a nap in the Trossachs coach, read the *Times* on the deck of the *Iona*, exclaim at the grand gloom of Glencoe, and vote Staffa an expensive bore; but, in recognition of the higher type of Saxon pilgrimage, lately illustrated by this magazine in certain spirited and discriminating "First Impressions of Edinburgh," which prove their author no more a "Stranger" to northern scenes, institutions, and idiosyncracies, we claim the vindication of our own national character from the assumption, that Scotch appreciation cannot, in its turn, travel south of the Tweed. It *has* dawned upon the northern intellect, that Englishmen are not *all* soulless aldermen, or mere business automata, alive to the one sense of the practical, any more than the Scotch are the semi-civilized race, subsisting on

oatmeal cakes and porridge, and—to a man—wearing kilts and playing the bagpipes, pictured by the cockneyfied power of idealism.

Reserving supreme veneration for the unapproachable sublimities of "Caledonia stern and wild," we acknowledge an attraction in the gentler amenities of southern scenes, such as lends an endearing charm to the sweet and home-like aspects of life among the green lanes and bright meadows of "Merry England." It was the writer's good fortune to spend a few pleasant weeks of last summer in the ancient county of Cheshire, which, in virtue of a rare historic prestige and aristocratic connection, holds its head high as a representative English shire, supporting the dignity in the exercise of a gracious hospitality, even more typically worthy of the national credit. A discursive record of impressions so agreeably formed may serve as an interlude to *The Attempt's* more able discourse, when the "season's difference" permits the sweet delusion of summer luxury, to "babble of green fields," and "fleet the time carelessly under the shade of melancholy boughs."

Through the busy city of Manchester, a dingier, clumsier Glasgow, reach we then the sylvan seclusion of Wilmslow, marked by antiquity, though not of modern magnitude. Here, on the site of forests primeval, cleared by the industrious Romans for their time-honoured roads and walls, the proud Normans have also left their mark, and that branch of the Derby family which won their favourite cognizance of the *Bird and Bantling*, or *Eagle and Child*, reigned the presiding deities of the place. The church, too, is an interesting relic of the past, its walls weather-beaten and crumbling, and their interior hung round with tablets commemorative of the honourable lives and regretted deaths of the Lord Suzerains and Lady Bountifuls of the neighbourhood. About the whole place there is more than mere rustic prettiness, there is the stamp of antiquity, which adds an air of refinement to the sweetness of pastoral beauty, and completes the gentle charm of an old English village, with its irregular street, primitive shops, gardened cottages, embowered inn, shady pond, and sleepy common stretching in the sun.

The great city of cotton, like its northern business prototype, adds to the value and enjoyment of its riches in the possession of such retreats, to which its care-striken votaries may retire to re-invigorate their worn

minds with the freshness and sweetness of nature. Of all those we have seen we should award the palm to Bowdon, which gives its name to little more than a charming collection of tasteful villas, crowning one of those rare eminences which enjoy the singularly fortunate position of looking down upon the wide extent of surrounding greenness and flatness. Cheshire's reproach, the want of good timber, is done away in the adjacency of Dunham Massey, whose fine trees form a park worthier of the name than those artificial-looking pleasure grounds which are so entitled by modern taste. But the grand glory of Bowdon is its churches, both of which are of rare Gothic beauty; and the parish church in particular, the most perfect possible realization of that ideal sacred edifice, forever associated with the half-angelic, half child-like musings of "Little Nell" in the touching close of her touching life. How beautiful, how solemn, the impressions of such spiritual art! it taxed a Master Expresser to indicate; and the hand that drew this living picture of the dying child in the meeting-place of living and dead is now, alas! cold too as its monuments. Both churchyards suggested a more cheerful train of thought in the smiling expanse of pastoral landscape stretched out to the wandering gaze, much as Milton describes:—

> "Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
> Whilst the landskip round it measures,
> Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
> Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
> Meadows trim with daisies pied,
> Shallow brooks, and rivers wide."

A yet more distinguished *point de vue* is Alderley Edge, a wooded hill commanding seven counties in its prospect, as

> "Wider and wider spreads the vale,
> Like circles on a smooth canal."

To our eyes, the pleasant *coup d'œil* was singularly enriched in effect by the surpassing freshness of the verdure the sole tribute that we are aware of having been offered to the persevering genius of a rainy season. "To go on the Edge" is the great excursion of the neighbourhood; and the fresh, free air, the climbing excitement and the exhilarating view render it a charming one. An unfailing resort of pic-nic parties, this pretty wood-crowned hill, (which resembles somewhat of the Gallow Hill at Moffat,) has all the rural essentials of such enjoyment in sunny, brace and shady nooks, soft grassy walks and quiet rest-

ing-places, a ferny dell with a miniature cascade and saintly and heathen wishing-wells, at which we do not despair of a renewed opportunity of drinking to the well-being of the *genius loci*, ancient and modern.

Manchester and Liverpool, as twin cities in the great English world of commerce, approximate in character as in contiguity, though individually distinct in their special celebrities of manufactures and shipping. Both deficient in æsthetical attractions, Liverpool must, nevertheless, be considered the finer city of the two. Approached *viâ* Crewe, on the Cheshire side, it may present quite a picturesque appearance, with the setting sun of a fine summer evening gilding its usually dusky spires and glimmering on the restless tides of the Mersey rolling between the Cheshire and Lancashire shores. The river is the glory of Liverpool. It is the vein of communication that introduces the new blood of young America to stimulate the steadier current of her aged parent; the first step on the golden highway to China and Japan; the grand emporium into which the wealth of the Indies is poured; a supreme link in which the ends of the earth are drawn together in bonds of amity. On its broad bosom are borne abroad, wealth, civilization and religion to all corners of the world. and the treasures of foreign mines and the rare products of strange climes are returned to minister to England's luxury and enrich England's purse.

It would be difficult to conceive a more wonderful study of human character than that daily presented on the river landing-stages. There, a never-ceasing stream of human life flows on, in all the moods of mind and variety of circumstance possible to the race. Manners, customs, costumes, tongues are blended in a confused medley of sight and sound that brings the irrepressible Frenchman, the stolid German, the loud Yankee, and even the outlandish denizens of India, China, and Africa, within observation of eye and ear. Some are coming, some are going, all are hurrying hither and thither, intent on business, pleasure, care, ambition, weaving each his little individual thread into the tangled, varied yarn of human life. Hope is there, on some faces, in all the brightness of aspiration and resolve combined; disappointment, anxiety, and failure tell their own tale; while the stolid mien of indifference and the proud stoicism of repressed feeling are not wanting. How many of life's most stirring episodes are not thus enacted? how many crises reached? how many careers begun and completed? The unwilling exile

here bids a longing farewell to his country and friends, in small hope, perhaps, of seeing either again; the young aspirant for fame and fortune sails gaily on his ardent quest; the mariner springs joyously towards his hard-won contact with *terra firma;* and the long-lost, the dear return to claim the loving home-welcome that is to them

> "For all their tears,
> The day of woe, the sleepless night,
> For all their pain and grief and fears,
> An over-payment of delight."

On the Prince's Landing Stage, as spiritedly sketched in a late number of the *Graphic,* the rich variety of the scene surrounding the pleasure boats leaving for the Isle of Man, and the tenders carrying more sober freights to cross the Atlantic or plough the wearier wastes of the Pacific, might suggest to Mr Frith a companion, if not a rival, picture to his "Railway Station."

The sights of such a city of the present as Liverpool are necessarily confined to the practical adjuncts of a great commercial mart; but these are most interesting wonders in their way. The Exchange and Town Hall are undoubtedly striking as architectural ornaments, both in size and style; and within their magic precincts is daily held, that imposing congress of merchant princes that rules the treasury of the world, and assembles the highest professional skill to feel the pulse of universal commerce and prescribe for her continued health and prosperity.

An Edinburgher rarely finds his native ideas of street architecture improved upon, and Liverpool possesses no claim to speciality in that respect; but to any one capable of enjoying a rich and varied display of the wealth of shop windows, the promenade up Lord Street to the top of Bold Street is by no means a disagreeable experience. The tramway system, as in operation here and elsewhere, if a comfortable means of conveyance, is a public inconvenience in confusing the traffic and cutting up the streets in a way that offends a sense alike of the beautiful and of the safe.

St George's Hall, as the great architectural feature of the city, presents an imposing exterior, appropriate to the magnitude of the interior arrangements which, above an underground wilderness of cooking apartments, prison cells, and machine rooms in connection with the grand organ, comprise the Assize courts, contrastedly shabby to those of Manchester; a little gem of a muse's temple, of philharmonic dedication; and that grand hall, whose

magnificent proportions and artistic ornament become minster-like when shaken with a harmony to which all within those stately walls must throb responsive, or own "a spirit dull as night," and "affections dark as Erebus."

Mr Best's bi-weekly performances on the grand organ must realize the softening, humanizing influence of music's spell to minds dusty with many cares, as the waves of majestic harmony are rolled out through the "mouth of gold" in a grand diapason of sound which includes that most wonderful of stops, the *vox humana*, truly (as described to the readers of *Good Words* in "Debenham's Vow), a weird imitation of the human voice. As it rose on our ear, now clear and thrilling, anon reaching a climacteric of passionate pleading, and then wandering away, plaintive and indistinct,

> "From harmony to harmony,
> Through all the compass of the notes, it ran,"

striking key-note upon key-note in the "still sad music of humanity" with the sympathetic power which "pierces the meeting soul" of the listener.

After lingering a summer day in the hot, noisy atmosphere of Liverpool, how thrice welcome is the little river breeze, which makes the five minutes' crossing in the well-appointed ferry boat, an invigoration as well as a repose. *To go on the river* is the relaxation of all classes, and the most liberal facilities are afforded for the enjoyment, both as to places to visit and means of conveyance thither. *Up* the Mersey, Eastham's sunny cliffs, clad in fairy robes of green, and looking across a sky-mirrored expanse of blue to the smiling vineyards of Garston, are all-inviting to form tea-parties in the gardens, or wander through the Aberdour-like woods to rural, shady Bromborough; while *down* the river, the sand hills of Egremont and gay pier promenade at New Brighton attract crowds of pleasure seekers, who care not to invade the luxurious seclusion of West Kirby, or breathe the more freshening sea breezes of Hoylake.

Such are unexceptionable as summer resorts and pic-nic rendezvous. Birkenhead is the every-day retreat, the evening home, or, yet more properly, the dormitory of Liverpool; and thither the jaded man of business nightly retires to recruit his exhausted energies, which must next morning be re-immersed in the whirling vortex of mercantile excitement. Out of a suburb, this resting place has grown to something of the size and importance of an independent town, characterised by an unfinished pro-

gressive look, sufficiently suggestive of a Canadian settlement to testify to the existence of local American relationships. Beauty of scene there is none, till beyond the range of villa habitations, extended as these are; but wealth has commissioned taste to challenge the criticisms of art on Sir Joseph Paxton's imitations of nature in the Park, where glades and alleys and sheets of water invite to worthy outdoor enjoyment.

Nature's most bountiful artificial growths lack, however, the character of her spontaneous imprints, and we, who love the great dame in her stern and reserved aspects even better than in her prodigal humours, preferring to tread the greensward solitude rather than the smooth-turfed pleasure ground, must joy in the walk to Bidston Hill, which, in its atmospheric unrestraint and speaking quietude, reminded us of the Brontës' descriptions of the Yorkshire moors. These girls loved the wide, free moor, and its yet broader expanse of sky, the heather, the larks, and the solitude, with a passionate fellow-feeling, consecrated to all of like sympathy with them for nature. Bidston Hill expresses something of this tone of natural inspiration with the quiet reticence of indwelling power; though in itself but a limited expanse of gentle upland, crowned on its head acclivity with a windmill, and commanding a sobering prospect of Cheshire champaign to the sea line. Climbing to the brow of the flat,

> "Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close,
> Up yonder hill, the village murmur rose,"

a busy hum of human happiness, which, in the mellowing distance, wrought no discord in nature's harmonies, but linked the thought of the poet with the fair scenes of earth immortalized in waking his inspiration, by the associative control of mind over matter. It is, indeed, the supreme hour of poetic enchantment when comes "still evening on," and

> "Shuts the day-star in his ocean bed;"

and we who need not to go further than our own Frith of Forth for magnificent sunsets, almost unsurpassed in the Bay of Naples, have acknowledged the dazzling glory of Phœbus' veiling majesty, as from Bidston Hill we have watched

> "The bright hair'd sun
> Sit in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
> With brede ethereal wove,
> O'erhang his wavy bed,"

till, on the dipping of the red disk beneath the western horizon, and gradual fading of the rosy hues of attendant

brightness, the dim blue outline of the Welsh hills looms out over the landscape in broad shadow, and

"All the air a solemn stillness holds,"

as Eve, o'er all,

"With dewy fingers, draws
Her gradual dusky veil."

Then shine out the kindling beacon and the lighthouse twinkle, and the electric communications of Bidston Observatory reveal the scientific enlightenment of the present age in pale relief against the picturesque shadow-land of the past, which yet breathes the spirit of primitive rurality in the adjoining village "hollows," where

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep"

Following in our "views," the dusky genius of bygone times, we find Cheshire's antique prestige embodied in Chester, itself an independent county palatinate of kingly creation. Its name, anglicized from the Latin *Castra*, the Camp, grafted on the old British *Caerlleon*, or Camp of the Legion, suggests a poetic association with King Arthur, whether numbered or not among the authentic memorials of a history connected with a long series of time's mutations. Their influence is predominant in an air of conscious dignity and subdued repose, befitting the shadow of a great cathedral, and the breath of ancient inspiration, which seemed to us to bring Chester marvellously *en rapport* with the æsthetic spirit of two Scotch towns, Ayr and St Andrews. The former of these derives even more of its charm from poetic association than from architectural refinement, while the town of old St Rule, with its ancient cathedral, tower of St Regulus, castle and university, the rocks and the sea, breathes of the grand serenity of learning; and Chester shows something of the same ancient air of high-bred superiority, the same religious calm, the same historic prestige, and the same atmospheric refinement, with an infusion of less profound sentiment becoming the difference between Scotch and English temperament. While the lively golfing links may bespeak gaiety as well as the stretching race-course,

"The river Dee, as silver clear,
His tumbling billows rolls with gentler roar,"

than the grim sound of the waves breaking on the sea-worn cliffs; each striking separate tones in the sacred music of association.

The quaint formation of Chester streets forms an unique study in architecture, with the line of shops on the street

level, overbuilt by a covered promenade, with an inner row of second-floor shops, so that the Cheshire dames may accomplish a serious window inspection without inconvenience, in the worst weather. Looking up at the old-fashioned lines of these "Rows," it seemed hardly a stretch of imagination to picture them gaily filled with the beauty, fashion and valour of England, to watch some spectacle in the street below; as their structure is commemorative of the grand stands and balconies erected for witnessing processions and mock tourneys in the days of Good Queen Bess.

The architecture of the houses is characterized by a regular irregularity, appearing in all heights of wall, odd gables and grotesques pilasters; the windows of multifarious shape and size, curiously shuttered, and the façades ornamented with the most fantastic devices in dark woodwork. The interiors of these domiciles are equally remarkable for winding passages and narrow corridors, with as many ups and downs on the floors as vicissitudes in the lives of the builders; so that, on one occasion of a visitor's introduction to one of those dwellings, mental bewilderment naturally raised the question, "Where was this house long ago?" Of these ancient habitations, the most notable are the Derby Palace, Bishop Lloyd's house, and the House of Providence, so called from escaping the plague, with a favoured isolation which lends a touching interest to the inscription on the façade, "God's Providence is mine inheritance, 1652."

The four principal streets are Roman roads, diverging from the ancient site of the Cross in the centre of the town toward the four city gates, North Gate, East Gate, Water Gate, and Bridge Gate, which are the historical property of various Cheshire powers, aristocratic and civic, and command the walls, of serious strength and thickness, further fortified by watch towers, now degenerate museums, to captivate the visitor with relics of past warlike history. In particular, the legend of the Phœnix Tower commemorates the fact of King Charles I. thence viewing his army's defeat on Rowton Moor; and from the delightful promenade furnished by the width of the walls, modern visitors have a similar command of the peaceful Vale Royal of Cheshire. The two miles circuit of the walls made under a July sun is enough of a morning's walk, after shopping and gazing, to earn the refreshment of an adjournment to Belland's, to taste the cheer of that

distinguished baker of wedding cakes to the Queen and Royal Family. Thence the "breathing time of day" leads us to afternoon service in the cathedral. Much is said now-a-days of the beauties of foreign churches, to the ignoring of our fine old English sacred edifices; but the jealous care of Chester is restoring this great ecclesiastical ornament to her town at an enormous cost. Its original construction is of noble magnitude complete in all the parts of a great church including nave, transept, chancel, cloisters etc. The Lady Chapel is a little gem of a sacred retreat lighted by a brilliantly colured window of the Nativity, the shady ivy-covered cloisters breathe the very luxury of seclusion, and the choir is a perfect Gothic church in miniature. In it the service was held with such impressive correspondence of ceremonial and æsthetic effect to a devotional tone of feeling that listening to the plaintive moan of the chanting culminating in a sudden burst of jubilant harmony, soul-stirring to the very stones and echoing roof, the ideal seemed not far off of Milton's

> Service high and anthems clear
> Which may with sweetness through mine ear
> Dissolve me into ecstacies
> And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

After hours spent in patient study of the deeply marked features of a town in which we try to read the half-erased characters of the past, there is no relaxing influence equal to the sweet society of nature, who is the same throughout the ages. As a fitting wind-up to our Chester visit, hand we then our steps to the silver-flowing Dee, and a row up to Eccleston, and rural tea drinking in some "cool sequestered spot," are the same to us as supping in Elysium on nectar and ambrosia. In tender, gentle farewell to Chester

"Down sprouds her [illegible] stream,"

[illegible] softening rays of the [illegible] Star of memory, as [illegible] still [illegible] the tide of [illegible], our life's music must [illegible] "[illegible]" of the "many [illegible]" of Eternity, and [illegible] light of

"[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]"

Ringa.

The Princess Elizabeth,

THIRD DAUGHTER OF KING CHARLES THE MARTYR.

TREAD softly, enter reverently,
For death is in this place;
And breathe one prayer, ere ye fitly dare
To look on that quiet face.

She was only a helpless maiden,
Yet warders you did bring,
And barr'd your doors, and all because
Her father had been your king.

You kept her a weary prisoner,
But at last she reached the door;
She hath found relief from pain and grief,
She hath rest for evermore.

Did you think you had chained the spirit,
When you held the flesh in thrall?
You forgot that death, to the strong in faith,
Was the surest rescue of all.

Yes, look on her, Puritan jailers,
The captive you could not keep;
For God's mercy clave the last dark wave,
And gave His beloved sleep.

YOLANDE.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

PART II.

WHEN the edifice we have fashioned for ourselves as the happiness and occupation of life has been shattered and destroyed, we find different kinds of efforts made at a partial repair of the misfortune. Some, out of the fallen materials, build up anew a similar but humbler structure, as men build trim little houses out of the ruins of fallen palaces. Others rather keep their ruins as ruins, clear them from all vulgar associations, and guard them from all irreverent footsteps. Time comes, and with kindly hand festoons the gaping rents with ivy, and crests the shattered towers with fern. We live there no more as once we thought to live, but we visit the places with ever

softer recollections and tenderer memories; and life, perhaps, has nothing more enduring to give, than that quiet dim ideal of what might have been, treasured away in a faithful heart. So would Gabrielle fain have treasured her brief summer engagement to Raoul; but her friends and neighbours were all agreed that it behoved her at once to build up another snug establishment out of her ruins. As a rule, everyone marries in France, unless, indeed, they enter a religious order, and this had no attraction for her. Even her uncle and aunt, who would have, on her marriage, to divide with her the farm or its products, took it so much as a matter of course, that they were only anxious she should not choose one of her poorer suitors, but Michel Talbot, who was already a man of position and consideration, well to do, and Mayor of Valmont.

So, when two years had elapsed, Gabrielle met on every side recommendations to leave off thinking of a lover who was evidently either faithless or dead, and ally herself, like a sensible woman, with her cousin. To her, too, duty seemed to point that way, although she would fain have remained as she was, treasuring Raoul's words, his brightness and refinement, of which absence and a touch of remorse had made her even more aware than in the old days of teazing and coquetry. In such a mood one summer afternoon she wandered down to the shore. The sun blazed above the western waters, the air seemed trembling with heat. Only the cliffs to the west stood out in cool blue darkness against the vivid sky and sea, their shadows stretching far across the golden sands. Gabrielle seated herself on a low rock almost circled by a clear sea pool, in which the oar-weed and dulse trailed and waved in the slow pulsation of the water, already responding to the rising tide. Old Françoise Corvet, wading back from the low-water fishing with her heavy basket and iron hook, came bare-footed through the weed and shallow pools and sat down with a sigh beside her.

"Tired, Françoise?" said Gabrielle kindly to the old woman, "the day is hot, and you have worked long."

"Yes, chère demoiselle," said the old woman, "you may well say I have worked long; *quarante ans de mènage*; ah, but it is with me now as with the little crabs and fishes down there in the pool; they have been very languid at times during the long hot day, but now they begin to shine and glance and rejoice again, because they feel the coming of the great sea; a few minutes more and

it will be up and over them, and they need stay no longer in the poor little narrow pool, they will be out through all the waters. I feel like them the rushing of the great sea drawing near, to which all goes, to which we all belong. To think that I will soon go, *moi qui vous parle*, after these many years. I shall see Martin again, and my son Amadiè, who sailed away and never came home."

"Martin, you say; but you have had another husband since? how did that happen if you have thought so of him all these years?"

"Que voulez-vous, ma chère; il faut vivre. We poor folks, if the man is gone, must be thankful if the boat is left, and some other man will marry us and work her. Jules was younger than I, but the deep sea has him too. I served him well, but oh, I loved Martin, and his and my Amadiè. But even rich women, who need no bread-winner for themselves and their little ones, ought not to stop their life's work beside a grave. If love is over till the next life, one may be a good wife, and a good mother, and a useful woman, as we all hope our Mademoiselle Gabrielle will be yet."

"But ah, Françoise, how when there is no grave!" said Gabrielle.

"Yes," said Françoise. "I have felt that too; quand on n'a pas vu mourir, c'est affreux. Some one comes down the cliff—it is he! A strange boat comes in—he is there! the *voiture de Rouen*—some one just like him is on it! and then the first pang comes all over again. At Valmont we understand all that; we know that our own dear sea is the cemetery of half our young men, and no one knows but God the moment when they go to Him. But when we have let go of hope, after the *messe des morts*, believe me something of their eternal rest descends also on our anxious, restless hearts. Here comes the sea! we must go. Never mind about being happy, be of use, chère demoiselle, and when you are as old as I am it will all seem pretty equal."

So saying, Françoise shouldered her *hotte* and plunged vigorously through the pool. Gabrielle smiled, but dwelt on the advice; it seemed as if marriage need not put her further away from Raoul. Françoise was much respected as a shrewd and hard-working woman, who had ruled both her husbands and all her children greatly for their own good, and her advice just turned the wavering scale; that very evening Gabrielle wrote at length to Michael. She told him how she still loved Raoul, and

could not believe he was to blame, but had made up her mind that he was dead. But if Michel could be contented with the friendship she had to offer, she consented to become his wife.

That same evening she told her uncle and aunt of her decision, and all was satisfaction at the farm. But she was wrong, though she acted from high motives of self-sacrifice; it was all very well for old Françoise, who needed a man of some sort to work for and scold; it is best for all women to marry, even without love, whose instincts are stronger than their reason or their affections. But not for Gabrielle, a fine nature, what the French call an *âme d'élite*, who, failing true companionship, could be self-reliant, and who, if mated and not matched, would be miserable.

Michel, the mayor, got two letters the next morning. Though he had first turned his thoughts towards Gabrielle because of her money, all the vicissitudes of his pursuit of her had awakened in him a strong passion for her, and he now wished to possess her even more than her land. He was a man slow, secret, dogged, persevering, but not deficient in the kind of good-humoured good sense that makes the average Norman a livable companion. He tore open Gabrielle's letter, and realized as he read how small had been his hopes, how intense the pleasure, nay, rapture, of their sudden fulfilment. "She is mine—mine at last!" he said again and again; her reserve of affection for the lost Raoul displeased him not a whit. His nature was not fine enough to concern itself with such subtleties. Gabrielle, with her rich beauty and sunny acres was his, and he would almost have liked the finiken doctor to come home and find him in triumphant possession. Quite half an hour of delightful reverie had gone by before he took up the other letter, a long foreign one, addressed to M. Paul, pharmacien à Valmont, a man who had been dead a year, leaving no heir, and so this letter had been brought to the mayor. He opened it, and glanced down the closely written sheets to the signature, upon which he paused, as if turned to stone, for many minutes; for the letter was signed Raoul Wachter. What a plunge from paradise to purgatory! with the cup at his lips to have it dashed down like this—it was too cruel, too bad for endurance. But was there no remedy, no chance for him? None for a man of honour, nay, of common honesty, certainly. Michel, as he sat and reflected, distinctly told himself he was not a man of

honour; he was a man who wished for one thing so intensely, that he cared not what he sacrificed to gain it. And a scheme suggested itself to him, seeming more and more practicable as he thought it out. He would risk all rather than lose Gabrielle, but the risk in the plan he was concocting was not, he told himself, very great. He might fail, and then he would have to leave the country; otherwise, if he went to announce the return of the hated rival, should he not still have to leave the country? could he bear to see Raoul the husband of his love, the possessor of the old Talbot lands. Of all of them, perhaps, for Gaspard had no surviving child. Never! All was fair in love and war; he would play high for so great a prize, and Gabrielle should still be his. He wandered from his house up the road behind Valmont. There stood the lonely old grey church, its solemn massy tower telling of centuries of storm that had battered without changing it. The round arches of the windows rose above the lowly graves of many generations; there were many little churchyard crosses decorated with wreaths of *immortelles*, or garlanded with fresh flowers. The great portal arch was like a deep cavern, fretted with strange mouldings, and worn ancient carvings, designed, perhaps, and cut by some old converted sea-king; the church, so old yet so strong, was itself a sermon in stone on the mutability of human affairs, and the unchangeableness of the faith it typified and sheltered. And in the porch stood Gabrielle, all in black and white, a sweet seriousness on her finely-moulded face. "I have ordered a *messe des morts* for Raoul to-morrow, will you come?" she said, stretching out her hand to Michel, who felt for the moment unworthy to touch it.

Should he say the word that would irradiate the sad face with delight? almost he framed it, and then suddenly straining her in his arms, he exclaimed, "Gabrielle, mine —mine only now, oh! what joy—but now I cannot loiter —I am sent for; I will be with you this afternoon at the farm." Freethinker as he was, at that moment he would not have dared to enter a church, and he dashed past. All his words jarred on Gabrielle, there seemed something greedy in this eager clutching at her half affection. They met again later in the day, and she thought she had never liked him less; there seemed something furtive about him, and an eagerness to hasten their marriage she did not like. He had indeed taken one of those irrevocable downward steps, that are apt to mark the countenance and bearing. The following day after the requiem

mass for Raoul, which was largely attended, Gabrielle lingered still in the old church. The weather had changed, and two or three anxious wives of men out on the stormy sea knelt here and there under the dark arches. One little lamp burned before the high altar; above in the great central lantern tower, where tall pointed windows marked a later date than the heavy round arches below, the wild wind made a music of its own, a low continuous booming, like a far echo of the rising tumult of the sea. Two or three little models of ships, dusty old votive offerings that hung suspended from the roof—

> "Sailing in air these hundred years,
> Safe smiling at old hopes and fears,'

were swaying slightly in the wind, which had found its way into the church. Gabrielle looked at them; if Raoul came back, what offering could they bring; then like a sudden pang came the thought, that soon she would not have the right to wish him back. She could not believe that he had lightly taken mortal offence, and gone away without a word; but it was possible, and then, why should she spend her life waiting for him? She longed and prayed for guidance, and felt ever a growing distrust of Michel, and confidence in Raoul, yes, even if that boat should have gone on the voyage whence they never return. More unsettled than ever in her mind she left the church, and sped along the top of the cliffs in the fierce wind. Once more would she visit the Mermaid's Fountain, and see if some token would come to point out her way. But she could only get half-way down the steep path, to a little refuge cave hollowed out in the rock. What a scene of tumult and terror! The wind flattened her against the rock where she stood, the sea was grey and foamy; but in shore the water was all one mass of white boiling surge. As the crested waves came thundering in, each in turn dissolving against the cliff, all their dark greys and purples flushed into white, with a boom and a roar that made the ground tremble; while cliff, sea, and sky were lost for a moment on the foam-cataracts, that sank again as baffled into the swirl of waters below. The rocky pinnacle out at sea was marked by the leaping white surges that darted far up its steadfast sides, scattering foam-bells over the sea-birds' nests on the high summit. Gabrielle dared descend no further, but cowered into the far corner of the hollowed

rock. That mighty resistless sea seemed to her to be telling Raoul's story in clear words. He had sailed away meaning to write and to return, and the sea knew the rest. Behind her, in a dark nook of the cavern, some letters were cut; she looked at them with idle indifference, then suddenly with intensest interest. "R. W. G. T.—A. E. I." That was all. "A. E. I. veut dire toujours,"—he had once said to her. Possibly he had carved that the night he disappeared. At any rate, that it was thus he thought she knew well, and her whole heart turned to him with intense affection. At any cost she resolved to free herself from the new entanglement, and she was amazed at the positive pleasure the thought gave her. She sped up the cliff, and returned over the windy fields to the farm, her mind made up. She came out of the wild weather into the large farm kitchen, where the wood fire sparkled brightly on the dark oak beams and panels. It shone on her smiling, glowing face, all dishevelled and wind-tossed as she was.

"Ohè, notre fiancée," said Gaspard, "well, it is something to see the child look like herself again,—hein, Marie?"

"That is because I am no fiancée—because it is all quite the contrary," said Gabrielle; "dear old uncle, I am so happy, because I am quite determined that it is all over, I shall never marry—never."

"What next!" groaned Gaspard, "certainly you were born for a cross; always just the contrary of whatever is,"—and he scratched his puzzled head.

But Gabrielle drew Marie's hands within her own, and told her tale. "Never ask me to leave you," she concluded. Marie, a delicate woman, far younger than her slow-witted husband, responded warmly.

"Mignonne, should I ever know how to spare you; to me this is nothing but good news."

"Well, we shall have the mayor thundering at the door directly, and what then?" said Gaspard.

"Not he, uncle, I will write him the prettiest letter, no one knows yet, and he wont care long."

"I am not so sure of that," said Gaspard,—and therewith came a knock at the door. Gabrielle stepped forward with her head up, and something of the look of a defiant young thorough-bred, who will not be caught, in her bearing. But in came only a good-looking, sturdy fisherman, Jaques Lecœur by name.

"Good evening! mesdames and monsieur," he said

"There is a wild wind out there on the *falaise*. I had to tack to get across to your trees. But I am going to St Jean; so Monsieur le Maire, he says to me, "it's not twenty thousand fiends blowing, nor the siren herself running up the *côte*, that would keep him away from here; but business, you understand—business of the state—has called him off to Rouen for three or four days at most; so he asked me to call in passing, and here's his note; and we all present our felicitations to Mademoiselle."

No circumstance could have occurred more embarrassing to Gabrielle.

"My dear Lecœur," she said. "some talk there has been of this; but consider yourself perfectly well informed when I tell you it will never be. I wish Michel were not from home, that he might help in contradicting the report."

"Ma foi, demoiselle, he was spreading it. Every one at Valmont has it to-day; but it is something to know more than others; never fear but I, or my wife rather, will repeat what you say. It is certainly strange that the mayor should be off; she will say that the siren is at the bottom of it."

"Madame Lecœur's head is always running on the siren," said Marie.

"That it is," laughed the fisherman, "she can't bear me to stop there for a drop of water. At any rate, *she* is no witch, la bourgeoise. She always shook her head about our good lodger, Monsieur Raoul,—one may speak of him here now, n'est-ce pas? that he had only one fault,—he was too fond of music, always playing, just the man to fall a prey to the siren. Only just before he went, he was playing so beautifully, that we asked him what the music was, and said he,—'It is all called Gabrielle.' Ah, he *was* a man. Adieu, demoiselle, I don't think you will regret your last decision."

Gabrielle felt sure she would not, as she wrote the letter which was to await Michel's return.

"After we have got over seeing him," she said to Marie, "we will go off to Rouen for change of air and ideas."

E. J. O.

(To be continued.)

A Prize is offered for the best Poem appearing in "The Attempt" during the months of August, September, and October.

Funeral Address on Mrs Mary Somerville.

Delivered at the General Meeting of the Royal Geographical Society of Italy, the 2d day of February 1873, *at the University of Rome, by the Vice President,* Count Miniscalchi Erizzo, *Senator*

Translated from the Italian

We have a great misfortune to lament. At Naples, on the 29th of November, died Mary Somerville, quietly and peacefully, with no previous illness, approaching her 93rd year. Her investigations in astronomy, mathematics, and physical sciences, were not only clear and profound, but almost unique. In her, our Society loses one of its greatest and most illustrious ornaments; science a follower so remarkable and eminent, as to awaken admiration rather than excite hope of emulation.

She was born at Jedburgh, in the county of Roxburgh, the 26th of December 1780, of an old illustrious Scotch family. Her parents were Admiral Sir W. G. Fairfax and Margaret Charters. She was brought up at a school in Musselburgh, near Edinburgh; married, while yet young, Captain Greig, Russian Consul, by whom she had one son. Left early a widow, she married, after some years, her cousin Dr Somerville, by whom she had three daughters. Two only, Martha and Mary, survive to mourn the grievous loss, having been the comfort of her life by their affectionate and attentive care, and having received her last breath yielded up in their arms amid words of blessing and of love.

Almost as a child she showed her singular disposition for physics and mathematics, and ingeniously found opportunities of cultivating it, by being present at her brother's lessons on geometry; and while she seemed absorbed in some feminine work, she followed actively and attentively in her own mind the solution of the various problems. When she met with difficulties, she used her father's nautical books to clear them up, for an explanation she dared not ask, as those were times, especially in Scotland, when it was thought almost unbecoming for a woman to take an interest in literature or science. Not only had she no help or encouragement, but opposition and obstacles were placed in the way of her cultivating those sciences in which, self-taught, she attained to such eminence that it has been said of her, justly and truly, "however difficult

to decide, who, in the middle of our century, deserved the title of King, there could be no doubt who was the Queen, of Science."

In 1811 a medal was presented to her in Edinburgh for the solution of mathematical problems.

In 1826 she sent to the Royal Society a work on the "Magnetic power of the more refrangible of the Solar rays." In it she minutely described trials made from the experiments of Morichini of Rome, and Berard of Montpellier, with the object of proving that solar light is the source of magnetic power. By means of a prism, the rays composing a solar ray were separated, and those now known as chemical or actinic rays, thrown on needles of various sizes delicately balanced, and first ascertained to be free of magnetism, after exposure for some hours to a strong light, the steel invariably showed a true magnetic character. Unmagnatised needles were then covered with glasses of blue crystal, and by exposure to the sun, became magnetic. From these experiments, Mrs Somerville concluded that the more refrangible rays of the solar spectrum, have, even in English latitudes, a strong magnetic influence. Her papers on this subject were reprinted in the Philosophical Transactions, and gave rise to many discussions on these difficult and delicate experiments, which were finally settled by the researches of Riess and Moser, which proved that the action on the magnetic needles was not caused by violet rays.

She made the acquaintance about that time of Lord Brougham, who, perceiving the strength of her intellect, and her deep knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, encouraged her to write the "Mechanism of the Heavens," for the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge." She soon began and accomplished the work, but the size of the book, and the width and depth of matter contained in it, were such, that in 1832, it was published separately. This magnificent work, founded on the "Mécanique Celeste" of Laplace, is the only strictly astronomical book she published. On it rests her reputation as a mathematician. It is indeed reported that Laplace, when speaking of mathematical studies then carried on in England, declared that "only two in that country could thoroughly understand his book; these two were ladies, Mrs Greig and Mrs Somerville," in fact one and the same person.

Scarcely two years elapsed before she published in 1834 her "Connexion of the Physical Sciences," the first

attempt yet made towards drawing the various branches of science into that close relation to one another which tends more forcibly than any detail to give unity and grandeur to the whole. Taking as her text the prophetic saying of Bacon, "that no natural phenomenon can be adequately studied by itself, but to be rightly understood, must be considered in connection with all nature," she shows how the progress of modern science, especially in latter years, is remarkable for its tendency to simplify the laws of nature, and reunite its different branches by general principles. This has in some cases proved identity, as in electric and magnetic influences, while in other instances, as in light and heat, it has led to the discovery of so many analogies, that there is reason to hope they will one day be referred to the same agent. All sciences are so bound together, that it is impossible to make progress in one, without a knowledge of others.

The theory of dynamics founded on terrestrial phenomena, is indispensable to a knowledge of the revolution of celestial bodies and their reciprocal influences. The motions of satellites are influenced by the form of their primaries, and the shape of the planets depends on their rotations. The symmetry of their internal structure proves the stability of the rotary motions, and the immutability of the length of day, while it affords us an invariable measure of time, and teaches us the actual size of the terrestrial spheroid, is the means of ascertaining the dimensions of the solar system, and furnishes a sure basis for weights and measures.

The reciprocal attraction of celestial bodies disturbs the surface of fluids; from thence arises the theory of tides and of the oscillations of the atmosphere. The density and elasticity of air, varying at every change of temperature, lead us to consider barometric variations, measurement of heights and capillary attraction; the theory of sounds, including music, must be referred to slight undulations of the ethereal medium.

A knowledge of the action of matter on light is needed to trace the curved passage of rays through the atmosphere; by its means the true position of distant objects is determined in the heavens and the earth.*

Thus we learn the nature and properties of the solar ray; its passage through ethereal fluid or into the interior of bodies; the origin of colours. From the eclipses of the satellites of Jove is calculated the velocity of light, this

* See Connexion of Physical Sciences.

velocity in the aberrations of the fixed stars, gives us the only direct proof of the real motion of the earth. The effects of invisible rays of light are nearly connected with chemical action; heat forming part of the solar ray is so essential to animate and inanimate life, that whether considered as invisible light, or distinct, it is too important an agent not to have a marked place amongst physical sciences.

Then follows its distribution in the interior and on the surface of the globe; its force in the geological convulsions of our planet; its influence on the atmosphere and on climate; its effects on vegetable and animal life in earth, air, and water. The connection of heat with electric phenomena, the electricity of the atmosphere and its powerful effects, its identity with magnetism, the phenomena of terrestrial polarization, can only be understood by means of theories on those invisible agents, probably identical, or at least the principal cause of chemical affinities. The common bond of analysis is such, that it continually extends its reign, and will at last embrace in its formula almost every subject in nature.*

This original work is as faultless in conception, as, from the vast number of facts collected and diffused, it is perfect of execution. It does not even fear the tremendous comparison with Humboldt's Cosmos, which it rivals and sometimes surpasses, treating with a master-hand the same subjects.

It is written in a simple and clear style. It has been often revised to keep pace with discoveries in science, and has passed through nine editions. It has been translated into several languages. It is certainly the most mature fruit of her meditations, the best work that has come from her pen, and by its circulation has much increased her fame.

Here I consider it my duty to record a fact much to her credit. In the early editions of her work, she expressed a doubt whether the aberrations in the tables of Uranus proceeded from the recent discovery of the planet (1781) not having given time for its motions to be precisely determined, or were owing to disturbances caused by some planet yet unseen rotating round the sun beyond the limits of our system.

"If after a certain lapse of years," she said, "tables

* See Connexion of Physical Sciences.

drawn from many combined observations were still found inadequate to represent exactly the motions of Uranus, they ought to reveal not only the existence, but also the mass and orbit of a body placed for ever beyond the sphere of vision."

It so happened, when publishing her eighth edition, that both Adams and Le Ferrier, unknown to each other, determined by ingenious and exact calculations the orbit-position of the new planet Neptune, found by Dr Galle of Berlin in the spot indicated by them, on the very same night he began to seek it.* A wondrous example of the power of the human mind, which can find by induction what is still undiscovered by means of the senses or of instruments.

The "Connexion of the Physical Sciences" was followed in 1848 by her "Physical Geography," in which she describes earth, sea, and air, with their animal and vegetable inhabitants, regarding the distribution of organic beings, and the cause of this same distribution.

Neither political nor arbitrary divisions are taken into account, but sea and earth are considered according to those great limits marked by God; and man himself, only in his relation to the other created beings who inhabit the globe; over these, however, he exercises by his actions a certain degree of influence, and is, in return, influenced by them. The effects of his intellectual superiority on inferior animals, and also on himself, by subjecting some of the most useful agents of creation to his will, as also other causes, which have the greatest influence on his physical and moral state, are amongst the most important subjects of this science.

She notices the position of the earth in the solar system, draws a rapid sketch of its geological formation, describes the great Continent from the ocean to Behring's Straits, the table lands, the primary and secondary systems of mountains, the southern lowlands of Manciuria, of Amur, of China, of Siam, the plains of Hindostan, the valley of the Ganges, the table land of Deccan, Ceylon, the Punjaub, the great deserts of India, the Arabian Peninsular, Syria, Lebanon, the Jordan and Dead Sea; then she passes to Africa, North and South America, the Pacific Islands, and examines the coral formations, the action of volcanoes and earthquakes in the Indian Ocean. She describes the

* Connexion of the Physical Sciences.

Arctic and Antarctic regions. She studies minerals, the ocean, the rivers of the various Continents, lakes, atmospheric phenomena, vegetation; the distribution of insects, fish, molluscs, infusoria, terrestrial and marine mammalia, reptiles and birds, and ends by the distribution, variety, and probable progress of the human race, if man will but remember that his power is of the mind, that his intellect alone gives him dominion over the earth and its inhabitants, many of whom could overcome him by physical force.

Man, she concludes, has made many attempts to domesticate certain animals with problematic result; his efforts to improve species, on the contrary, have been crowned with success. His wants and pleasures have caused great changes in animal creation, and his propensity to destruction perhaps still greater; but the works of the Creator are wisely balanced, and man cannot with impunity break the laws of equilibrium.

May the increase of riches, luxury, knowledge, and civilisation, induce man to preserve the equilibrium which exists in meteorological forces, and in the vital condition of countries when in their natural state, by favouring a just proportion of woods, save from destruction those myraids of most beautiful living forms which have shared with him the inheritance of this wonderful world.*

This book, the first perhaps which elevated geography above the modest aim of describing the various quarters of the globe to the height of true science, embracing with wide synthesis all that composes, lives, and inhabits our earth, met with very great success in England, where it became popular. Six editions came out in rapid succession. To each she made the additions and corrections rendered necessary by travels and the progress of science. It was translated into many languages; into Italian, by another Scotch lady, the Countess Elizabeth Pepoli. In 1869 it was rewarded with the Victoria Medal by the Royal Geographical Society of London.

One of the many strange facts regarding the power of human genius, is the lucidity and vigour of mind which the veterans of science preserve to the most advanced age; but biographies do not perhaps record a more wonderful example than that of Mrs Somerville, who, full of years and of knowledge, already past eighty, published in two volumes, her "Molecular and Microscopic Science,"

* Physical Geography.

which thoroughly collects and contains the most abstruse and patient researches, modern discoveries not only in physics and chemistry, but in a special manner whatever secrets of the vegetable and animal kingdom the microscope has revealed.

"Microscopic investigation," she says, "of organic and inorganic matter, is so peculiarly characteristic of the actual state of science, that she ventured to give a sketch of some of the most prominent discoveries in the life and structure of the lower vegetable and marine animals, in addition to a few of those regarding inert matter."

"These investigations which have revealed the most refined and wonderful relations between light, heat, electricity, and highly elastic media; the relation of those powers to the particles of solid and liquid matter, new methods of analysis, and the microscopic examination of that marvellous creation, animal and vegetable, which is invisible to the unaided eye of man, have brought a new accession to the indefinitely small within the limits of modern science."

We know nothing of the forms either of atoms or of molecules; but we are sure that an atom never changes, it never wears or alters, it is indestructible even by fire, the same now as when created. Matter is liable to perpetual change of place and combination, the amount remains the same; "the bed of the seas may be changed to dry land, and the ocean may again cover the lofty mountains, but the absolute quantity of matter changes not."

The various forces of nature constantly change their form of action; their total sum is never changed. "It may be dispersed in various directions, and subdivided, so as to become evanescent to our perceptions; it may be balanced so as to be in abeyance, or it may become potential as in stalic electricity; but the instant the impediment is removed, the power is manifested by motion."

In the first part of her book, she gives a clear idea of the actual state of molecular science, enough to show the present opinions on the forces of nature, atoms, and the general laws which result from the phenomena of their reciprocal action. By means of spectrum analysis, she proves not only that much terrestrial matter in an extremely attenuated state is a constituent of the luminous atmosphere of the sun and stars, but that nebulæ in the most distant regions of

space contain some of the elementary gases which we breathe.

She then proceeds to prove that the atmosphere is teeming with microscopic germs of vegetable and animal beings, awaiting favourable conditions to call them to life, and to perform their part in the economy of the world; and this is the triumph of microscopic science.

"Not only were the most wonderful organisms discovered in the ostensible tribes of the Cryptogamia, but a new and unseen creation was brought under mortal eye by the power of the microscope, so varied, astonishing, and inexhaustible, that no limit can be assigned to it. This invisible creation teems in the earth, in the air, and in the waters. These beings have a beauty of their own, and are adorned and finished with as much care as the creatures of a higher order. The deeper the research, the more does the inexpressible perfection of God's works appear, whether in the majesty of the heavens or in the infinitesimal beings on the earth."

Here she enters the field of biology; relating the progress made in the science of life. She describes the functions of animal structures, of sarcote, of muscle, of blood, "that ultimate result of the assimilation of the food and respiration, which conveys nourishment to all the tissues during its circulation, repairs the waste of the muscles and nerves," nourishes the muscle and restores strength to the nervous system, on which all our vital motions depend; "for by the nerves volition acts upon living matter." She then continues to explain how "the perpetual combustion of the oxygen of the air with the carbon of the blood derived from the food, is a real combustion, and the cause of animal heat," not more essential to animals than to vegetables; "but if the carbonic acid gas produced by that chemical union were not continually given out by the respiratory organs, it would become injurious to the animal system." How, upon the expansions and contractions of the heart, depends the circulation of the blood; how the mechanical and chemical forces follow the same laws that they do in inert matter, but neither mechanical nor physical powers could create a germ, nor give it life, "unless a vital power existed in it, the origin of which is beyond the reach of man." She investigates the nervous system, the electric currents in the muscles and nerves, the functions of the brain and spinal cord, and quotes the saying of Sir Charles

Bell, that "we are placed between two worlds, the invisible and the material," our nervous system is the bond of connection. The connection, however, between the mind and the brain is unknown, it has never been explained, and is probably inexplicable."

The molecular structure of vegetables and animals has been so studied by men of science, that a fragment of tooth, bone, or shell, recent or fossil, is sufficient to determine the species to which the animal belongs: if fossil, to point out the geological period in which it lived, and whether it was an inhabitant of earth, air, or water. She observes how the microscopic examination of a small foraminifera has proved beyond doubt, that Eozoön existing in a geological period too remote for our imagination to calculate, differs only in its size from a species of our seas. The simplicity of its structure preserved it through all those geological changes, which for millions of centuries caused myriads of much more highly organized beings to disappear. It is the most ancient living form known, and probably inhabited the primitive ocean. Carbon, which in the form of graphite, is disseminated through the same strata, indicates that vegetation in that extremely remote epoch of the earth had already begun; that the vivifying influence of the sun, the constitution and movements of the atmosphere and of the ocean, the alternation of day and night, of life and death, were the same as at the present time.* Thus reviewing the wide field of modern science, from the heavens to the earth, from the stars to microscopic beings, from algæ to exogenous plants, from protozoa to molluscs, from geological formations to the laws of life; never yielding to flights of the imagination or to the fascination of new systems, she proceeds boldly and surely on the arduous road, she unravels with a master hand the most ingenious theories, the most difficult and intricate arguments, in a simple, lucid, and elegant style, with lively and picturesque descriptions, with that clearness only to be obtained by a complete mastery of the subject in question; and, with a power peculiar to herself, she groups, digests, condenses facts, experiments, and theories, giving breadth and unity to the whole.

She is as firm in her principles as she is deep in her learning. Science being the search after truth, offers her an

* Molecular and Microscopic Science

occupation of immense interest, and a subject for sublime meditation. The contemplation of nature raises her mind to admire what is noble and great, and makes her repeat with Sir James Mackintosh, the object of every study is to inspire the love of truth, of wisdom, and of beauty, and especially of goodness, which is the highest beauty; and of that eternal and supreme Intelligence, which contains all truth and wisdom, all beauty and goodness; and thus the mind of man, by the love of these sublime aims, raises itself above low and perishable objects, and prepares itself for those high destinies which are reserved for all who can render themselves worthy of them.

However great might be the power of her mind, and the immeasurable breadth of her learning, her goodness and the exquisite womanly feelings of her heart were not inferior. One could not say which was greatest,—the power of her genius, the goodness of her heart, or the array of her domestic virtues. Humble and modest, decorous in her habits, courteous and dignified in her manners, always equal and pleasing,—a tender and loving mother, an obedient and devoted wife, a sincere and constant friend. She had a peculiar gentleness of character, a grace and simplicity, which were sure signs of the goodness of her soul. Her conversation, when using her own language, in which she expressed herself elegantly, though always with a slight tinge of her native Scotch accent, flowed easily and naturally; without a shade of pretension, she could speak on the most arduous and elevated subjects, revealing the clearness of her mind and her deep knowledge.

She was of middle height, of a slight and delicate but healthy figure; capable of enduring immense labour of mind. Nature had endowed her form with no less beauty than her mind with talent. When she spoke with her intimate friends of the wonders of nature, even in her latest years, there shone on her countenance that ray of divine intelligence, which the study and the love of goodness and truth ever mark with an indelible seal on the face of their worshipper. This remarkable woman, who passed the early hours of the day meditating on the mysteries and laws of nature, who exercised her mind in the most abstruse and sublime calculations, who, as a relaxation, read Sophocles and Herodotus, Virgil and Horace, in the original, cultivated music and painted particularly well, read all the books of the day, even the lightest literature,

took an interest in politics, and sitting with her daughters in the evening hours, often with work in her hand, fulfilled the social duties of a refined and polished lady, with the grace, and dignity, and charming manners, that all who knew her admired. She could speak on the most ordinary subjects. even on fashions; she shared in the amusements of life at parties and assemblies; never showed that, under those easy and courteous manners, there lurked something greater than a gentlewoman in high society.

Her excellence in feminine work is described as so great, that she could darn old lace so neatly, that it was impossible to find out where she had repaired the ravages of wear and time.

Having left England on account of the delicate health of her husband, she dwelt amongst us thirty-four years, at Turin, Genoa, Spezia, Bologna, Venice, Florence, Rome, and Naples. It can thus be said that in Italy she composed the greater number of her works.

She followed attentively the progress of science; when I saw her last year at Naples, for the last time, I asked her what then particularly engaged her. She answered me, "The Quaternions of Hamilton," the most recent and remarkable kind of mathematical calculation, sent to her expressly from England.

Great was her fame, not only in her own country and amongst ourselves, but in America, France, and Germany; indeed, wherever deep studies are cultivated and admired; and the most superior men of the age, Lord Brougham, Sir James Macintosh, Sir Humphrey Davy, Sir John Herschel, Sir David Brewster, Sir Charles Lyell, Sir Roderick Murchison, Faraday, the Napiers, Lord Minto, the Marquis of Northampton, Layard, Pentland, Humboldt, Airey, Plana, and Arago, were her friends and admirers.

She received honours from the Royal Astronomical and Geographical Societies; our Government offered her a medal, our Geographical Society inscribed her amongst its honorary members. Queen Victoria, when Sir Robert Peel was in power, settled on her a pension of £300 a-year; and her country, a severe and unimpassioned judge of the merits of her sons, placed in the Hall of the Royal Society her bust by the side of Newton.

To the end of her life, except a slight difficulty of hearing, she did not suffer from any failing of the senses, and she retained at that great age a true appreciation of the beauties of nature, and a power and activity of mind as

clear and as pure as the bright sky under which she ended her days.

In the hard study of mathematics we also can boast of the Agnesi, Malvasia, Bassi, Borromeo .but they are all lesser planets when compared to this great Scotch woman.

On me, her old and familiar friend, whose guest she was on the banks of the Benaco, has devolved the melancholy, but welcome and honoured duty, of recording her glories and her virtues. In the fulness of my affection and my grief it comforts me to fulfil it, and record that, without neglecting a single gentle and affectionate domestic duty, she has raised to herself a monument *ære perennius.* She has shown by her example to what a high degree of knowledge and of fame the fair and gentle part of the human family can attain. HILDA.

Glencora.

I CHANCED to hear a poet tell,
"The Muses in Glencora dwell,"
In his enraptured dream,
The burn that murmurs down the glade,
Beneath the leafy, beechen shade,
Is the Castalian stream.

Yet I have wandered through the glen,
In summer's noontide glow, and when
The west was all aflame:
But never in Glencora yet,
My rambling steps the Muses met,—
No inspiration came.

Why no response to nature? Whence
The strange, mysterious influence,
That stirs the soul to song?
A deeper touch its depths must thrill:
Powerless the glen, the lake, the hill,
Loved by the Muses long.

Why doth the self-same moonlight shine,
Rapt minstrel, on thy eyes and mine!
Yet *I* am not inspired?
How comes it, that the sunset's gold
Unmoved this evening I behold,
The next,—my soul is fired?

The spring of poetry is deep
Within the poet's soul,—asleep
For many a day it lies.
What potent charm can reach it there?
No outward scenes, sublime or fair,
Can bid its waters rise.

Like the wild harp, that yields its tone
To touch of wandering winds alone;
Such is the poet's breast.
Let some strong passion sweep the strings,
And forth the hidden music springs,
Not now to be repressed!

It comes, the inspiration! then,
Go wander over hill and glen.—
Where'er thy footsteps turn,
All is with poetry aglow!
Unsought, the rushing numbers flow,
The flashing fancies burn.

Thou canst not help but sing! 'twere vain
To check the upward-gushing strain,
Till thou hast poured the whole.
Now Nature speaks, and thou canst hear!
Nor come her tones to eye and ear,
But thrill within thy soul.

OMICRON.

Milla Forres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER XIV.

PEGGY'S GRAVE.

OLD Peggy's death made a deep impression on both the girls at Milla Forres,—and on each, according to their different natures, it had a powerful influence. Nancy cried herself ill, and was in bed for a week; then rose and went about her usual avocations with as gay a step and as light a heart as ever, though the slightest allusion to Peggy

would always bring a shade over the bright face, and the ready tears into the soft brown eyes. Barbara, on the contrary, after the first uncontrollable burst of emotion, seemed to have laid the matter aside. She did not cry like Nancy, nor was she ill, but the *spring* seemed to have left her, and more than ever she was inclined to spend the long evenings in indolent dreamings by the fireside. This first approach of the dark messenger to their little charmed circle, seemed to have made Nancy cling more closely to the dear ones who remained; to her sister, and Alaster, and old Elspet, she had never clung so fondly. To Barbara, on the other hand, the foundations of all those home affections seemed to have been shaken by the dread realisation of the truth that they might pass from her grasp. She was more silent, more self-contained, and more abstracted than before, and took oftener than ever long solitary rambles by the burn side, with no other companion than old Oscar. One day, about a fortnight after old Peggy's death, she set out on one of her lonely walks. The day was sharp and bright, with a cold, cloudless, blue sky, and the grass in the glen was stiff and sparkling with frost. Half unconsciously she found herself following the path that led to the little presbyterian kirkyard, where old Peggy's remains had been laid. It was a quiet spot in a nook among the hills, where the little, low-roofed, white-washed church stood, amongst a few white gravestones, and very many an unmarked grassy mound. Some large birch trees grew inside the little enclosure, and under one of them, they had laid all that was mortal of old Peggy. As Barbara swung open the wicket gate, she saw the figure of an old man, in a black coat, leaning against one of the birch trees. His clerical habit and stooping form, at once assured her that it was the old minister, standing by the grave of the beloved wife, who had been his companion for thirty years, and for whom he mourned still with as fresh a sorrow as when God took her to Himself, now nearly twenty years ago. Two little children, who had died some forty years ago, slept under the same stone, and the old white-haired man came often there, not now to mourn for them, but to think of the time, which could not now be far distant, when the family, so long divided, should be re-united in a better country, "where an enemy never entered and from which a friend never went away." Barbara would have turned away reverently when she

saw the old minister at his household grave, but he had caught sight of her, and turned to meet her. Seventy-five years had left their marks on the strong, weather-beaten face and long grey hair and stooping figure, but old Mr Mackay's eyes were as bright and penetrating to-day, as he raised them to the fair young face before him, as they had been when he wooed his bride on the bonny braes of Aberfeldy fifty years ago.

"How do you do to-day, Miss Barbara?" he said in a kind fatherly tone, holding out his hand as Barbara approached. "You, too, have come at last to seek 'where they have laid' her. You are looking for Peggy's grave?"

"Yes, Mr Mackay; but I know the place. It is under yon old birch tree. I have been here before."

"Aye, aye, my dear; the time is pretty sure to come to each of us, when the kirkyard becomes hallowed ground; it's been that to me this forty years, ever since my wife and I laid our wee Jeanie here. I mind we thought our hearts were broken. It's a sore thing, the first hallowing of the kirkyard." He paused a minute, and Barbara stood looking reverently on the lonely old man, to whom the kirkyard had become a family altar.

"Aye, it's a sore thing, my dear," he went on; "but it's a blessed thing too, when we've got the first sheaf of our harvest safe housed up yonder. Its the foretaste of the harvest-home. You're young, my dear, and I daresay you hardly understand it yet, but it's true for all that—it's well for us, poor earthly creatures, to have even our earthly treasure in heaven, for 'where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.'"

"Mr Mackay," said Barbara, in a low voice, "it seems to me as if old Peggy's death had shaken my confidence in everything, as if everything might tremble to pieces any day, and there was nothing firm to lay hold of at all."

"Aye, aye, my dear. I daresay—I daresay—when death first comes near us, it does make us feel like that; but you know, Miss Barbara, who says, '*I* am the same, and my years shall not fail.' I mind when my dear Betsy died, and the world seemed turned upside down, and I felt like a drowning man, tossed on the dark waters, that verse came to me like 'an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,' and brought a great calm."

"Yes," said Barbara, drawing a long breath; "it is a rest to think of that."

"Good-bye, my dear," said the old man, holding out his hand; then laying it solemnly on her head, he said, "God bless you, my child; we do not know what may be before you yet, but 'commit ye your way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass,' and remember, if ever old Dugald Mackay can help you, you must come to him as if he were your father."

"Thank you, Mr Mackay; I will indeed," said Barbara, earnestly. The old man shook her warmly by the hand, and went out at the little gate. Barbara stood still a few minutes after he was gone, watching the stooping figure on its way to his desolate home, then she turned towards old Peggy's grave. She sat down on the grassy mound, and her thoughts wandered away to the sad story of the woman's life that lay beneath. The cheery home, that first death, and then sin, had desolated; the solitary, yet happy years, in the little cottage under the cliff, and the sudden, yet triumphant end. And she tried in thought to follow the released spirit in its flight, to those "many mansions," in which she had so confidently believed, and tried to imagine Peggy, old no more, nor sorrowful, but an inhabitant of that blessed country, where none shall say any more "I am sick." And then the thought would come, what if all that beautiful faith should prove to be only a dream; and if the dust, sleeping so quietly under the grassy mound on which she was sitting, should turn out after all to be all that remained of old Peggy! Barbara struggled against the unwelcome thought, and called herself wicked for letting it even pass through her mind; and yet, though in her deepest heart she firmly believed in that heaven of which the old woman had spoken so confidently—so difficult is it for us, poor material creatures, to realise the unseen and eternal—that ever and anon, in spite of all her efforts, it *would* recur. Then her thoughts wandered away to the daughter who had been such a grief to Peggy, and she speculated on her unknown fate, and how she should keep her promise of giving into her hand, if she were yet alive, the few pounds that had remained of Peggy's little hoard in the old stocking, after paying for her funeral, and the old, well-thumbed Bible, which had been committed to her care. Then, from speculating about Peggy's daughter's unknown past, her mind went on to speculate about her own equally unknown future, and she fell to wondering how *her* life would look when she came to look back on it from the

borders of the other country, as old Mr Mackay was doing. She was just beginning to think that it was time for her to be turning her steps homewards, when she was startled by a footstep close beside her; she turned round, and saw—his face, strangely wild and haggard—Alaster Macdonald standing before her.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REVELATION.

"ALASTER!" exclaimed Barbara, starting up from her seat on the grassy mound that covered old Peggy's grave, "where on earth have you come from? I thought you were in Perthshire! Have you been at Milla Forres? Have you seen Nancy?"

"Barbara," he answered, in a low husky voice, "I have come to see *you*, not Nancy. Listen to me," he said, seizing both her hands in his; "I *must* speak to you. I can be silent no longer, Barbara; it is *you* I love, not Nancy." He held her hands as in an iron grasp while he spoke, his burning eyes looking straight into hers. The fierce passion in them, and his white, haggard face frightened her for a moment. She staggered back, silent and trembling, with a face as white as his own.

"There!" he said, suddenly dropping her hands and turning away drearily; "the murder is out. I suppose you will never look at me again. I can't help it. I have told you the truth; now despise me as much as you like."

He leant his arms on an upright gravestone that stood near, and buried his face on them. Barbara stood silent and trembling by him; the man's wild passion had almost stunned her.

"There," he said, after a minute or two, lifting his head fiercely, "why don't you go away? I tell you I have perjured myself. *I*, Nancy's plighted husband, love you, Nancy's sister. Don't you hear? Why don't you go away? I am a villain, I tell you," he said, his voice dropping almost to a whisper, in which he seemed to hiss the words from between his clenched teeth. Then he dropped his head again upon his arms, still folded on the top of the gravestone.

The utter dejection and misery of his tone and attitude roused Barbara from the half trance of fear that had come over her. She stepped towards him and laid her hand hesitatingly on his arm. "Alaster," she said, in a

faltering voice, "I don't quite understand—— You don't love Nancy!—you can't mean that!"

"I *do* mean it; it is *true*—I tell you, it is *true*. Why don't you go away and leave me?"

Still she did not move, nor take away the trembling hand that lay upon his arm. He turned round on her suddenly, and seizing her in his arms, pressed her wildly to his heart. "You do not go away! you stay with me! you love me, Barbara! Oh, say that you love me, and no power on earth shall part us!"

For a moment her head lay upon his heart, as if it had found its proper resting-place; then, with a sudden start and a great cry, "Oh, no, no, it cannot be!" she wrenched herself from his arms and fled down the hill. He did not follow her; he stood gazing after her a minute, while the wild passionate glow on his face faded into an expression of blank dejection; then he sat down on old Peggy's grave, and buried his face in his hands.

Barbara, meanwhile, fled homewards like a hunted thing, and never slackened her pace till she got within the door of Milla Forres. It was dusk by the time she reached home, and she gladly slunk upstairs in the darkness, thankful that under its cover she might enter unobserved. She slipped into her own room, bolted the door, and threw herself down on the bed. The room was full of weird shadows in the deepening twilight of the short winter's day, and Barbara felt as if she had attained a haven of refuge in its stillness and gloom. She shut her wearied eyes and began to try to think—to try to realise what could be the meaning and the bearing of the scene she had just passed through. In her flight from Alaster back to the old house, she had simply followed an unreasoning instinct to run away from it all, and hide herself in the familiar, safe old home. She had thought of nothing but the desire to seek the old well-known refuge, just as a wounded animal flies back to its lair, with an unreasoning feeling that it will be safe there, and that amid the old familiar surroundings, it will awake to find the fear and pain of the present only a feverish dream. But now that she had got home, and was lying in the stillness and twilight on her own familiar little bed, in her own well-known room, where every chair and table seemed a part of herself almost, she shut her eyes and tried to think what was this new strange thing that had happened to her. But her mind was all in confusion, and she

could not think. Alaster's wild, white face and burning eyes seemed to be scorched into her very brain. She saw them when her eyes were shut, and they looked at her out of the gathering twilight when she opened them. His passionate words of entreaty and despair seemed to ring in her ears through the silence, and her heart throbbed with the recollection of that one moment of strange delirious happiness, when he had held her in his arms, and her head had rested on his heart. What did it all mean? What was to be the end of it all? She could not tell; she could not think; she could only feel. She heard Nancy singing at her spinning-wheel in the hall below. The hall door was open, and she heard snatches of the song in her sister's clear young voice. She was singing a plaintive old ballad of a lady wooed and then deserted; and always at the close of every verse the refrain rang out more clearly:—

> "Oh, fause, fause was the ladye's knight,
> An' waner aye grew she,
> Till Death he pred the lily white
> O' fan Kirkconnal lee."

Somehow, the refrain sung in that clear young voice sent a shiver to Barbara's heart. When she had finished her ballad, Nancy began to croon over the grand words of the Magnificat, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, because He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden; and behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed; for He that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is upon all them that fear Him, from generation to generation." The grand old words of faith and triumph seemed to calm the tumult in Barbara's heart; and, utterly exhausted with the day's excitement, before they were done, she had dropped into a quiet sleep. She slept on for several hours. Nancy came upstairs shortly after, wondering that she had not returned, and was quite surprised to find her lying asleep on her bed. She did not disturb her, however, but went down stairs again. She was tired of her spinning-wheel, and the great empty hall looked desolate in spite of the roaring fire of peat and wood that blazed in the huge fireplace. So Nancy took refuge, as was very common with both of the sisters when they wearied of the solitude of the empty old house, in Elspeth's bright cosy kitchen. The kitchen was bright

with fire-light and candle-light, and with its clean, well-bricked red floor and wooden dresser, where the rows of plates and jugs reflected the glow of the fire-light, looked by no means an uninviting retreat from the chill vacuity of the hall. Elspet was sitting on a low chair by the fire-side. She was "redd-up" for the afternoon, and her mutch, and kerchief, and apron, were all as white and tidy as hands could make them. She was knitting the coarse blue worsted stockings generally worn in those days, and her bright wires glittered in the fire-light under her rapid fingers.

"I've come down to keep you company for a while, Elspet," said Nancy, "the hall's so big, and cold, and empty."

"Has Miss Barbara no come hame?" inquired the old woman, looking up anxiously; "it's ower late for the like o' her to be stravaging i' the glen."

"Yes, she's come home, but she must have gone straight upstairs. I found her lying fast asleep on her bed," said Nancy.

"Is there ocht wrang, think ye, Miss Nancy?" said Elspet. "Think ye she ha'e gotten ony hurt that the doctor does na ken o', that nicht on Benvorlish?"

"Oh, no; Barbara's quite well. What makes you fancy that, Elspet?"

"Just she's no a'thegither like herself sin' syne. She doesna spin half sae muckle as she used to do, and she doesna gang aboot sae muckle; and when she *does* gang, she gaes her lane, an' she just danders aboot—she doesna walk wi' a spring in her fit like a young fallow-deer, as she did afore."

"Nonsense, Elspet; I'm sure there's nothing wrong with Barbara. She never complains of anything; it's just your auld-farrant fykes, you dear, old, anxious thing," said Nancy, sitting down on a low stool, and leaning her head against her old nurse's knee.

"Ah, weel! ah, weel! I hope sae, my hinny. It wad be an ill day for us a' if ocht were wrang wi' Miss Barbara."

"I think Peggy's death has vexed her very much. She didn't get ill like me; but I'm sure she felt it, though she didn't say much. Barbara never does," said the girl.

"Aye, aye; 'still waters rin deep.' The grief that rins out at the een is no the warst kin', an' it's her first trouble. I dinna like whan troubles begin, Miss Nancy; it's no

aften that the first's the last—there's aye a second and a third ahint it."

"Oh, Elspet, don't be superstitious! See, here comes Barbara, to tell us she's all safe and sound."

JEANIE MORISON.

(*To be continued.*)

"The Larger Hope."

'Tis lovelier than the rosy flush of morn,
That ushers in the glorious day,
'Tis sweeter than the primrose and the song
That gladden us in month of May.

It has a music, passing words to tell
How rare the beauty, rich the tone,
A music meet for every human ear,
Which each heart listening, makes her own.

It came to us when weary in that night
Whose darkness had made sick our soul,
We hailed it as a beam of quick'ning light,
Whose living radiance made us whole.

I have not speech in which to clothe this Hope
In height, in depth 'tis so divine,
I almost tremble as I touch the chords
And sing to them in words of mine.

"So far"—you say, "restrain th' ambitious gaze,
Such distance makes thy vision dim;"
Nay, for the soul gains blessing as she looks,
Midway, her eyes do rest on Him,

The Christ who holds the "Keys of Hell and Death"
Within that wounded human Hand,
Which touched with love the tender infant's head,
And has all worlds in Its command.

He knows the anguish which our bosoms bear,
He knows this Hope which makes us strong,
Seeing Despair and Death our conquer'd foes,
And Right triumphant over Wrong.

And should the voice of conscience speak to us,
And send a tear to dim our eye,
Reproaching thus—"How faltering thy steps
Though lighted by a Hope so high."

Then thinking how a touch, like mother's touch,
Hath met us in past hours of woe,
Again we'll look towards that Sacred Face,
And o'er His Feet our tears shall flow.

Then deem it not a dream that profits nought,
Since strength with it to us is given,
And ardent inspirations after God,
To know Whom makes this Earth a Heaven.

A dream! sweet Hope, I cannot name thee thus;
Hast thou not reached us from above?
God's messenger, I paint thee in my heart
Clothèd in Justice, crowned with Love.

A Dream, O God! if with the *dawn* of Life,
Thy children find a bud so fair,
Beyond, where their sun reaches fuller height,
Shall they not see fruition there?

FRUCARA.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

PART III.

ONE little letter—a few hours of acquiescence—had wound a chain round Gabrielle she found hard to break. She forgot how different was the value of her hardly extorted consent to her lover and herself. Michel was a fortnight away, and meanwhile the village talked. At the fountain, at the fish-market, at the cafés, the affairs of the Talbots were freely discussed, some siding with the lady, some with the gentleman. At last Michel returned, and curtly refusing to accept Gabrielle's change of purpose, appointed the following evening for an interview at the farm. He came, accompanied by several of the notables of the village, and was received with some ceremony by the Talbots, who had assembled various friends of their own, headed by the Curè, who was known to approve of

Gabrielle's resolution. When all were seated, Gabrielle walked into the room, and there was an unconscious majesty in gesture, as well as in words, as she began. "Monsieur et mon cousin, I ask your pardon for having deceived you as well as myself, in believing I could become your wife. As soon as I had written the letter I see in your hands, I became aware that I had made a great mistake, and that I can never marry, unless my affianced husband, Raoul Wachter, should return. Of this I have no expectation. I believe him to be dead, but I belong to him still. Be generous then, and let us be good friends as before."

Gabrielle seated herself in perfect stillness, and waited for a reply

"I quite see the difficulty," answered Michel, who was red and excited, "Mademoiselle cannot persuade herself of the death of Doctor Wachter. I come prepared to show that we have every proof of it but the knowledge of how it happened. Be pleased to look at these papers. Here you have the receipts for 3000 francs, produce of the sale of his effects here. Is it likely that a young professional man should thus lightly abandon his property? Here you have his college and hospital diplomas; his certificates of character, all those papers, without which a medical man can practise in no country. Monsieur Wachter was devoted to his profession, and a rising man in it. Do you suppose he would abandon it also, as well as his bride, were he still alive? No; Wachter is dead, and Gabrielle merely yields to a not unnatural but passing scruple when she will not accept the situation she has herself arranged, and content herself with the devotion she has inspired, yes, and encouraged in me."

A sting lurked in this last sentence.

"No; I never loved you. I told you so often," flashed back Gabrielle, and at once ceremony and civility went to the winds. No man can well endure being told such a thing publicly, and Michel's real, fierce, coarse nature broke out. What! was he to be cheated like this? He would drag them all before the tribunals,—he would show the world what Gabrielle really was. Gaspard endeavoured to put in that if the mayor sought for money compensation, the matter should be considered. Gabrielle, her head erect, said, "I will not be threatened." But Michel stormed on, and at last arrived at—"And what should you say, supposing that after all Monsieur Raoul were comfortably

married to some one else; suppose I could find out and prove that?" and there he stopped short, and turned as pale as he had been red.

"Monsieur," said the Curè, "you used words almost implying you had some grounds for supposing Wachter to be alive. If you have, I charge you to declare them."

"None, none, whatever," faltered Michel. "A man does not know what he says at a time like this. I ask your pardon, Gabrielle, we shall speak of this later when we are calmer," and he hurried away.

That evening something occurred, which made a good deal of talk in the neighbourhood. Several boats were going out to the night fishing, past the Fontaine des Sirènes, and the water being high, they sailed between the detached rock and the shore, and afterwards many of the fishermen declared that they saw the mayor standing beside a lovely lady, who was sitting on a rock. She was beautiful, and a stranger, and her long fair hair fell down to the rock on which she sat. Monsieur le Maire might assert what he chose about its being only a friend from Rouen, the country were agreed that it looked extremely like most questionable dealings with the Siren.

"And I wish there were such things, that we might ask them what has happened to my Raoul," said Gabrielle.

But there are such things still, although there be no witching song stealing over the sea, luring mariners to their destruction. Are there not sweet spells cast by fair enchantresses, that yet are full of evil power to those who yield to them. For surely all beautiful things that beguile but do not ennoble, are but the song of the siren, luring the unwary to the prison caves below. Had Raoul been fascinated by such a spell? We must go back two years to follow his story.

* * * *

On the evening of the dance so long ago, Raoul had hurried down the cliff above the fountain with ruffled temper; but by the time he had reached the little cavern half way down, his vexation had died away, and he felt his annoyance was absurd for such a trifle. Sweet Gabrielle, why should she not dance with the clowns, who, at least, had the merit of admiring her intensely! He chipped idly at the rock beside him, carving out their initials, but growing ever dreamier, till he dropped asleep. He slept till the night was deep, when a slight noise woke him; and peering over the edge of the cliff, he saw a pretty sight by the moonlight. A short way out a

sea, a trim fore-and-aft vessel was hove to; her boats were plying to the shore, and a few dark figures were in line between the fountain and the sea. Evidently a ship come for water. There was, however, something peculiar in the whole appearance of things, that made him hurry down the rocky stair, which he had hardly left before two or three oddly dressed men hastened up to him. "What ship is this" he began; when, to his intense amazement, he found himself, without a word, seized, gagged, and dragged away. There was not a moment for resistance, but in one of those flashes of thought, quicker than all action, he remembered that it was important to leave some trace of his presence there; and he threw the little pocket containing Gabrielle's watch, the first loose thing he could find, unperceived into the shadow. He was hurried into a boat, and his captors, now taking some pains to secure him safely, rowed with him to the schooner, shoved him into a little state cabin, and left him to his own reflections. These were more of amazement than anything else. He could not conceive what had happened to him, and why! Though no unnecessary force had been used, he felt sure his captors were adepts at deeds of violence. Their language, too, was utterly strange. Day had long dawned, and the vessel was rapidly forging through the sea, when the door was unlocked, and an elderly sailor-like man entered. He greeted Raoul civilly, and then pulling out his knife, cut the cord that fastened his hands, with some muttered oaths and exclamations in English. Raoul, who spoke English fairly well, at once asked him a dozen questions in a breath. The old man's face showed a comical mixture of awkwardness, cunning, and a touch of kindliness too, as he began—"No pirates are we, but an honest enemy of France; the *Ziama*—Captain Perez, Spaniard by birth, in command. From Algiers, bound for somewhere on the Flemish coast, to pick up arms. The Flemings are making muskets for us, but it's not easy to get them. No land carriage, and your fleet blockading our whole sealine. I am the mate, by your leave, Tom Elliot from Berwick on Tweed; and right vexed am I to be the cause of your detention. I'm the only man among them who knows these waters well, and as we run great danger of capture, and can't put into a port, being short of water I advised watering at the moss spring there. When you came jumping down the cliff, the fools took you for

the coastguard, and so carried you off to keep their secret."

"But I am no coastguard," said Raoul, "and I will tell nothing. For heaven's sake, set me ashore."

"No, my lad," answered the sailor, "that won't do yet awhile. Guard or no guard, they would have taken you; once an alarm given, and the Flemings would not dare to bring down their guns—and the whole coast would be roused; you must keep quiet and civil, and Perez will put you ashore somewhere, when we have our cargo, and are safe."

"Where then? and can I send a letter now?"

"Letters! no; we can't send them. Well, they might leave you on the Spanish coast, I think."

"In Spain!" said Raoul. "Why, sir, I am a doctor and surgeon. I have my patients—my affairs. Let me see the Captain directly—for a bribe he may do something."

"Aye, you may see him, and feel thankful he did not pitch you overboard at once, or make a slave of you—which I take to be a degree worse. Ten years ago he would have done it, but our glorious Lord Exmouth has given these rogues a fright; they dare not work such as us in the galleys now, and they fear murdering us, because of reprisals. But in Algiers, mind you, I can't say what they might not do. Perez can't get hold of a bribe if he would accept it. If you get landed in a week or two on the Spanish coast, think yourself well out of an ugly scrape."

"You said *us*; are you not a Christian; an English sailor, too—can't we help each other, and both get off?"

"So I am, and an honest man to boot," answered Elliot, "but I just think a man should turn an honest penny out of rascals when he can; so I serve as mate—for high wages, mind you—better than I can get elsewhere; they have so few good navigators like me. And I'm all right, England is not at war with Algiers; we licked them ten years ago, and made peace. And before that, we were good allies. Was there ever a shindy in the Mediterranean between us and any other nation, without our getting a help from their swift galleys. Why, they were just a whip in our hands for all southern Europe. But the steamships are cutting out the galleys; when I have saved a bit more, I'll leave them. And now, Monsieur Wachter, as that is your name—why, you are more of a German than a Frenchman,—come with me to

breakfast. Except in-shore you need not be a prisoner; only don't vex the old man—that's Perez—nor any of the crew; for, except myself, they are as nasty a lot of murdering thieves as you will ever see together."

Raoul followed the talkative old man into the chief cabin, where chocolate and breakfast were laid out. There sat Perez, a sulky and silent renegade Spaniard, and Jussef, the second mate, a young Algerine. "I'll tell them you are a German British subject, and they had better take care what they are about," said Elliot, continuing in Arabic to the Captain, who replied in the same language. "No harm is meant you, if you will stay quiet, till you are put ashore," said the mate—"if not," and he made a significant gesture of a plank being tilted into the sea. Raoul forced himself to eat while thinking over his situation. France had lately declared war against the Bey of Algiers, who, after a brief respite, won by the British bombardment of Algiers, had fallen back into his former piratical ways. The French fleet maintained a strict blockade of all the Barbary coast, but this schooner had run the blockade, and stolen north to get contraband fire arms from the Belgians, always ready for any profitable market.

But there seemed no reason for Raoul's detention when once they had their cargo and were well to the south, and so he resolved not to make himself unhappy about a passing inconvenience; and as he lay on deck, under the shadow of a sail, while the vessel slipped swiftly through the water, he looked round him with some interest and curiosity. He soon perceived the vessel was much overmanned for her size, and the surplus members of the crew usually lay about on deck smoking and chatting. They took some pains not to show over the gunwale, when sighted by other ships, but allowed the few seamen of more European aspect to appear most. For they were chiefly Africans, well-armed, unpleasant barbarians, who looked askance at their own captain for allowing such freedom to a "dog of an infidel" like Raoul. Elliot was very kind; he shared his cabin with Raoul, where, however, only one could sleep at a time, and often exhorted him for this voyage to take their oath of allegiance, and enter himself on their books as surgeon, for they wanted one; good pay seeming to him to compensate for any little drawbacks of their situation.

The third night Raoul's sleep was broken by the cessation

of the motion of the ship. He heard the anchor dropped and the boats lowered. No doubt they were going to take in their cargo. What an opportunity for escape! The cabin door was bolted on the outside, but a small case of surgical instruments was still in his pocket, and it only needed a little time to pare away the wood and shove back the bolt. He went stealthily into the empty chief cabin, where were stern windows large enough to pass through. A clear moonlight shone on the sea, and on a flat line of coast only a quarter of a mile off, boats were plying between; evidently they were fetching the muskets in. The moonlight was against him, but the craving for liberty was so strong, that, slipping off his coat and boots, he cautiously opened a window, and with no audible splash, dropped into the sea. He made for a point on the shore some way down, swimming low in the water, and reached the edge of the high dyke evidently unobserved. Peering carefully over the top of the dyke, he found his difficulties had only begun. The hideous country was so flat and bare, that this dyke commanded it for miles. Near the vessel a file of people were rapidly passing packages from hand to hand. The worst was, that a little further down than where he landed, a couple of sentries were planted on the dyke. He could not hope to pass them unobserved, nor cross the open in the moonlight, nor stay in the shadow where he was, because they would miss him in the schooner. There was nothing for it but passing, or mastering these sentries, and then trusting to speed. He might run too far along the line of the dyke for it to be safe for the contrabandists to pursue him. He crept up to within a couple of yards of the sentries before they saw and challenged him. One remained above, the other began to scramble down the dyke, holding on by one hand. Raoul sprang on him; wresting a horse-pistol out of his other hand, and discharging it into his body, threw him violently down. The other man fired aimlessly, and Raoul, springing up the dyke, felled him with the butt-end of the pistol, and then tore away at the top of his speed down the shadow of the dyke. The alarm was given to the men about the boats; but they were so far off that no doubt he would have escaped, had he not run suddenly into a group of peasants with a cart-load of muskets, who were creeping slowly along the sand in the shadow.

"Let me pass," panted Raoul; "I am a Christian escaping from the Moors."

Alas! stupidity is as dangerous as malignity at times These dolts understood no French, and had but one idea in their addle heads—money. No doubt this was an informer, and they might lose the high profits of their night's work if they let him go. So they hustled and impeded Raoul, without daring to attack him, for the Flemish lout has no extra valour in his composition. He could always clear a space round himself but the precious moments flew by, some of the swiftest sailors dashed up and found him still hampered by the peasants Raoul, now thoroughly roused, and a fine specimen of the noble Alsatian race which unites much of the firmness of the German and brilliancy of the French nature, seemed, however, actually to owe the crowd of low-type Flemings and Africans round him His eyes blazed like blue fire, and in his torn shirt his finely-made frame showed to such advantage, that Perez, when he arrived, knowing well the money-value of a man was the more anxious to take him alive—yes, though Raoul, seeing his chief enemy, turned upon him, knocked him down, and in the confusion which followed, once more got off. All was now, however, hopeless, the brave Belgians were bold enough to run after him in a mob, and, breathless as he was, he was soon retaken, and brought in triumph to the Algerines; then back to the hated vessel, where he was rudely thrust into a little dark storage closet for ropes, and securely pinioned. Presently came the reaction of all the excitement, and the intense first disappointment of a man whom continued good fortune had made unusually sanguine. As his wrath died away, his grief grew overwhelming. Was it death in his young prime, or a hideous, hopeless slavery, that awaited him? Was it only a week ago that he had not a trouble in the world! only a week since he was wandering in the golden harvest-fields with Gabrielle! What was she thinking now? Looking out seawards with sad wondering eyes, waiting in vain for him. No sweet last words to treasure, only that wretched little bickering dispute—parted without a parting. The thought of her brought at last a rush of tears, the first shed since childhood, and he sobbed himself wearily to sleep. He was woke by the mate with a lantern. "Now, my lad," he began, "I am heartily sorry for you, but there is nothing left but to be guided by me You *are* in a scrape. Perez

dare not land you now if he wished. Why, you deserve to be the Britisher I swear you are," and the old mate chuckled. "To see you knocking about these Flemish boors like nine-pins! and there's two of our villains badly hurt—shouldn't wonder if they died of it—and the old man himself, with a tooth knocked down his throat, raging about in a fury. But it is against his interest to harm you. He can't get on without my seamanship, and, indeed, my boy, I've stood by you. I never thought to like any one so much again, and can't afford it. But you must sign our articles, wear a fez, and doctor our rascals—never mind about curing them—till we get to Algiers, where all will soon go rightly; for the old hornet's nest will be harried in good earnest this time, and you will get back to France."

"No," said Raoul; "they may kill me, of course, but I will do nothing for them."

"Do you know what that means?" said the mate, grasping his arm. "They won't kill a fine young man like you if they can help it; *such fetch their price in Algiers.* But it means real slavery; the worst work, blows, torture, and that from any nigger on board. Had you seen what I have, sights to make a hard old fellow like me sick, you would sign a bit of paper and be done with it. Here, let me cut your hands free, and come back with me to the cabin." So saying, he led him out by the arm, and along the crowded deck.

"I am a Frenchman," he reiterated, "and I will not serve on board an Algerine ship." Luckily, no one understood, and Elliot brought him safely to his own cabin, where he began carefully to wash away the blood from some slight hurts Raoul had received. His mood softened under the old man's officious kindness, and he dropped his head wearily in his hands.

"Is there no Christian here on board," he sighed. "Oh, if I could but see a priest."

"Christian, indeed!" quoth Elliot, "I would have you know that I am a better Christian than any of you benighted Papists can be!—poor lad—craving after their blind superstitions. And me the son of a minister, who well could have told you that there is no getting past what's foreordained. Kismet, say the Musselmen, we do what we must do; and so far they are true believers, better than the papists with their dirty works and ordinances any day. Meanwhile, here's food and clothes, eat and wash and rest, and we will talk later," and off he went.

Half mechanically Raoul followed his advice, and the very fact of being restored to his usual aspect had something soothing in it. There lay his dainty little case of instruments, given by a great surgeon in Paris. He began dreamily to handle it, when he was startled by a groan, rising to a shriek of pain. He opened the door into the chief cabin, and saw Jussef, the second mate, lying on the settee, while Elliot and another were about to dress an ugly wound on his shoulder. Their bungling was exasperating, no wonder the man cried out; indeed, the mate afterwards confessed, he did let the fellow's shoulder fall with a good thump to wake up the doctor. Raoul looked on till professional instinct was too much for him. "Leave the man to me," he exclaimed, and, in two minutes, Elliot had the satisfaction of seeing his protegé absorbed in his patient, and delicately handling the shattered shoulder that was his own handiwork. The man, a young and handsome Arab, turned his languid eyes gratefully on him, and a mutual good understanding at once began. The case was so anxious, that Raoul half forgot his own troubles, and Elliot judiciously bringing the oath to subscribe at a critical moment, he signed it, in presence of the captain and others, describing himself as Walter, a Hanoverian subject, and feeling rather like an imposter and a deserter, yet too weary and pre-occupied for further resistance. Jussef got better, and sedulously taught Raoul Arabic, in exchange for his cure. And so the voyage went on prosperously for the schooner. After some fighting, which gave her surgeon employment, and many narrow escapes, she anchored at last in the harbour of Algiers; and Raoul heard he was to be landed, and given over to Mustapha bou-Mezrag, Bey of Tittery, who had long desired to have a European surgeon in his suite. Gabrielle and liberty seemed further off than ever! E. J. O.

(*To be continued.*)

A Poet's Apology.

I.

WE all receive some sense of poesy,
Each open soul cups dew-drops from above,
Greater or less the portion sent may be,
Greater or less it waxeth as we love.

And he that hath, receiveth ever more,
Till the full measure runs beyond the brim;
Then he would give his neighbours of the store,
And bless them, with what giveth joy to him.
He is more blest that gives than that receives;
(We know 'tis ever thus upon the earth)
Because the heart from which the gift has birth,
Values the thing it gives, and so believes
That men might joy for even a few drops given,
From the full tide whose fountain is in heaven.

II.

Pure, as the spring of poesy must be,
Is every drop from such a source distilled,
The darkness in the stream we often see,
Lies in the vessel that the dews have filled—
Lies in the atmosphere itself exhales, [go—
Through which the drops pass, gathering as they
Lies in the breezes that its neighbours blow,
Athwart its little storm of passion gales.
And soon the smoke-taste of the city rain,
The smoke-hue of the murky atmosphere
Distinge the dew-drops that God sent so clear,
And that so clear will rise to Him again;
Yet some would blame the source whence they [were given,
As aught impure could leave or enter Heaven.

III.

A little vessel easily may fill,
Far sooner than a well more broad and deep,
Whose rugged sides let the clear liquid steep
And drain forth verdure in soft secret rill.
But the cup filled, though from the dews of heaven,
Is early satisfied, and pours away,
Flashing upon the air its sparkling spray,
Rejoicing in the treasure freely given.
While the deep well, waits till the thirsters come
To cast in vessels, drawing for their drink,
Lets no stream ooze above its stony brink,
Contents itself to store up and be dumb.
Hence the mere fact that men may have to give,
Is no sure test that they most richly live.

LUTEA RESEDA.

Notes on some Pictures in the Royal Academy.

I HAVE heard it said by more than one person, that the Exhibition for this year is scarcely up to its usual average. Certainly there is no one single great picture to make it memorable; but there are many pictures scattered through the whole, so exceedingly attractive and artistic, that to study them is a real delight; and I am going to try if I cannot so reproduce my impressions of some favourite pictures, as to impart to others a share of the pleasure which I have found there. I do not presume to speak as an art-critic, nor have I always chosen the pictures which are most sought after; but have merely attempted to describe those to which I always returned with fresh pleasure, and to describe them as they appeared to an ordinary observer.

Following the order of the catalogue, one of my earliest favourites was No. 114, "Hay-time,"—V. Cole. A wide English landscape—in Surrey, perhaps—stretching far away over woodland and plain, till the distance is lost in faint blue haze. In the foreground is the grand wreck of a noble old tree; its trunk, all knotted and gnarled, is almost bare of branches, only a few leaves tell there is life in it yet. Some little children, in brilliant kerchiefs of orange and scarlet, play beneath; while to the right the long swathes of rich grass fall beneath the mower's hands, and the sweet meadow-flowers grow close up to our feet. The picture is not perfect. There is especially a want of atmospheric effect in the distance; but it is a beautiful subject, and painted with much true feeling for nature.

In the same room, I lit by chance upon three small, but very pleasing pictures. "Not at Home" (No. 167,—F. D. Hardy), represents a painter crouching behind the door of his studio. The door is locked, doubtless; still the artist can scarcely overcome his terror, for underneath appears a hand, pushing into the room a paper with the ominous words, "Income Tax!" The colouring is quiet and harmonious; the painter wears a purple doublet, pleasantly faded, and his rainbow-tinted palette, and vermilion tipped brush, supply warmth and brightness.

The other two are even more fascinating; they are called "Sera-t-il pris?" and "Il est pris!" (Nos. 174, 182,—E.

Frère). The subjects are very simple; there is snow on the ground, and in the first, three eager children are watching the movements of a bird, which is approaching the snare. In the next, the same group, reinforced by a comrade, are gathered round the little captive, and are cautiously raising the edge to see if their prize is really safe within. There is to me a special charm about these pictures; the children's faces and attitudes are admirable, the colouring very true to nature; they would always be pleasant to look at and to possess.

And now we come to the large gallery; and here, indeed, it is difficult to know what to prefer. Let us pause before No. 254, "The Bonxie, Shetland,"—T. C. Hook. We are grateful to the artist who has brought back for us this perfect bit of coast scenery from the far-off Shetland Isles; and every one who knows anything, even of the more accessible Hebrides, will recognise its truth and beauty. Just so does the sea break in eddies of clear and translucent green round the cliffs of Staffa; so the tide comes rushing and curling over the rocks, to fall back again in jets of foam. And the tender herbage grows to the very edge of the precipice, and the sea-pinks wave over the dizzy height; and far on the horizon the sun's rays glitter on the sea, and each separate wavelet reflects the light with diamond lustre. All this we have seen; what is more seldom met with is the adventurous party of boys, of whom one reaches forward to seize the coveted prize of eggs, while another holds him firmly from behind, and the eagle hovers screaming above. One wonders, so fresh and cool is the general atmosphere, where these boys have got the lurid flush which glows in their complexions. Perhaps danger and excitement have brought the colour to their cheeks; and, indeed, we should scarcely recognise the artist, but for this touch of his usual manner.

There are several interesting pictures in this corner. No. 247 is to my mind the best of the four subjects exhibited by Faed. No. 91, "After the Victory,"—widow and mother mourning their slain, is very touching; why is it that we are not more affected? No. 55, "Happy as the day's long," is far too suggestive of washing, brushing, and strict injunctions that the little one is by no means to move, to make us believe the title. No. 222, "A Lowland Lassie," though pretty, is refined till all character is smoothed away. But the bare-footed

"Skye Lassie," (No. 247), resting her basket of peats on the bank beside her, who has not met her in the Highlands? who does not know the picturesque wildness of her appearance, or what shy dark eyes will be raised to greet the passer-by who accosts her?

Close by (No. 246), is a fine picture by H. O'Neil, "Tintoretto painting his dead daughter." Very sweet is the white head reposing on the pillow, with its wealth of auburn hair, such as Italian painters loved; white flowers are scattered round her; and her father, his task abandoned for the moment, has fallen into a sad reverie as he sits by her side. But I think the painted head on the canvas behind him destroys the unity of effect. The idea would have been quite sufficiently indicated by the brushes and palette in Tintoretto's hand. The living colouring (for he has painted her as asleep), seems harsh and crude after the fair dead face; and above all, the tints are too rosy, almost florid, to harmonize with the red-gold hair, which in nature is generally found with a complexion of a delicate and peculiar paleness.

On the opposite wall hangs a picture by E. W. Cooke, (No. 419), "Steeple Rock, Kynance Cove, Lizard; Low Water," to me one of the most beautiful in the whole Exhibition. It is a real poem, and as you gaze at it, its surroundings seem to fade away and leave you alone on the shore. The scene itself is before us. Almost we could walk on that firm smooth sand in the foreground; then how grand is the rugged mass of serpentine that rises in the centre, with all its rich tints varying as the light or shadow falls upon them. Out in the bay the great sea-horses are racing in, all life and stir. Soon the first ripple will creep round the further side of the pinnacle, and the tide will be on us before we are aware. To the right—sinister object—are the great bare ribs of a wreck, like the bones of some extinct animal; and a touch of life is given to the scene by the birds collected in the sand searching for food.

One cannot help being struck with the very strange, unsuitable subjects chosen by some artists. Such a picture is "Brothers of the Brush," (No. 234,—Eyre Crowe.) This represents a London shop front, against which is poised a tall ladder, occupied by no less than six painters, one above the other; the whole looking so absurdly like a pantomime when the "comic business" has begun, that we quite expect to see the clown appear,

the painters to turn into acrobats, and the shop-front to part in the middle and disappear from the scene. Of the same class is the banquet scene from the *Tempest*, (No. 286,—P. F. Poole,) "Thunder and Lightning. Enter Ariel like a Harpy," etc. Sure enough, we have the long table with ample table-cloth—black thunder-clouds in the distance—the harpy alighting on the table, and the feast breaking up in most admired disorder. But the subject is quite unsuited for pictorial effect; nor is Shakespeare honoured by having his airy conceptions thus materialized. Of the Gadarene Swine, (No. 988,—V. Prinsep), I really cannot speak. Such an extraordinary piece of grotesque irreverence (irreverent, from the utter and glaring impossibility of the whole scene), was surely never before perpetrated.

Lady artists hold a very creditable place in the Exhibition. Miss Starr's rendering of Sintram's interview with his mother (No. 311) must be pleasing to all lovers of that grand romance. I think the architecture and perspective are open to criticism, but the figures are life-like, and without exaggeration, and we may well accept the conception of the black-haired young knight, kneeling before the grating, "silently weeping," feeling "as it were in Paradise, where every wish and every tumult is hushed." "Do Doggies Gang to Heaven?" (No. 391, —Miss G. Martineau), attracted me by its title, and I found it, a small oval, badly hung, the boy's face, and the wise, loving attitude of the dog expressing its question well.

A more important picture than either of these is No. 1096, "Hero-worship in the 18th century," by Miss Osborne. Its motto is from Boswell. "Two young ladies who were warm admirers of his (Johnson's) works, went to Bolt Court, and were shown upstairs where he was writing; one of the females repeated a speech of some length, ... which when the speaker had finished, she panted for her idol's reply. What was her mortification when all he said was 'Fiddledee, my dear!'" In quoting these words I have described the picture, for it tells its story admirably. Johnson's heavy, large-limbed figure is full of expression; he has flung himself back in his arm chair with a look which exactly says, "Fiddledee, my dear!" and the young ladies, pleasing, intelligent girls, in spite of a touch of affectation, seem scarcely to realise what a rebuff they

have met with. I do not believe it was thrown away upon them, they look as if they had quite sense enough to profit by it.

Two very striking pictures are to be found together in gallery No. VII., and here, I think, the hanging is unquestionably in fault; for these pictures destroy each other's effect, and are as incongruous as a mixture of orange and silver, or flutes and trumpets. No. 677, "Borrowdale," (C. E. Hering), is a lovely painting of serene evening twilight. The stately mountains group themselves round the still lake: the sun has left the lower levels, but his light yet lingers on the distant ranges, and the clear sky is dappled with flecks of cloud of the most delicate gold and rose. The motto chosen for this is not particularly happy, as neither flowers, leaves, nor birds form an element in the landscape:

> "When evening's twilight gathers round,
> When every flower is hushed to rest;
> When autumn leaves breathe not a sound,
> And every bird flies to his nest."

To me it much more expresses the spirit of these lines of Wordsworth—

> "It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
> The holy time is quiet as a nun
> Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
> Is sinking down in its tranquillity."

In startling contrast to this, you look directly under it, and your eye meets "The Vocal Memnon; Sunrise, Plain of Thebes, Egypt (No. 676,—A. Macallum.) This is a noble transcript of a scene which few of us can hope to see in reality; we feel, as on looking at a speaking portrait of an unknown face, this *must* be true. The two gigantic hewn figures, deeply impressive in their power and massiveness (uncouth though they be, with scars and rents in their outlines), stand erect before us; the upper part has caught a flush so intensely vivid, that no words seem strong enough to give an idea of its brilliancy: it is like lambent flame. The rocks in the background are suffused with it, the sky is kindling likewise; while far away stretch the tawny desert sands,—

> "The ever-silent spaces of the east,
> Far folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn."

The time-olden legend lives again: fitly is Memnon said to be the son of Aurora, when her rosy fingers touch his

statue with such a living glow; almost we can believe in the sweet sounds that issued from it as the goddess drew near with her "wild team," that

> "Shake the darkness from their loosened manes,
> And beat the twilight into flakes of fire."

I will only describe one more picture, lest by attempting too much, I fail to convey a distinct impression of any. As I recall "Mistress Dorothy," (No. 893,—G. A. Storey), I scarcely know whether she be a portrait, or some sweet creation of the brain. There is a rare charm about her face, a sort of serious grace, as she looks calmly at us from under the large shady black hat, which, however, does not at all conceal her features. A large muslin collar or kerchief, and a black dress—it is a half-length—complete her attire; the back-ground is neutral, nor is there one single accessory to spoil the simplicity of the effect. I would only venture to suggest that one of her gloves might have been off, such an uncompromising pair of "Hexham tan" rather spoils the shapeliness of the hands which they conceal.

ENNA.

From Eve to Sunrise.

RED, in the sinking day-beam's golden sheen,
Ripple the wavelets o'er the long-drawn sands,
Creeping up slow as if to nestle there—
Then shrinking coy to seek their home again;
While, far on high, the lark sings forth his joy,
As if to hail the ships that homeward come;
And from the distant hill,
And through the dreamy lea,
The winding brooklet, sparkling, leaps to meet the sea!

Around the russet rocks the waters lap,
Foamless and glassy in their glitt'ring green,
Responding slow with ceaseless rise and fall
To the long sweep of ocean's swell afar,
On whose lone breast the wild winds brood and dream;
And low and lower sink the slanting rays,
And touch the distant hill,—
While through the dewy lea,
The winding brooklet, laughing, runs to meet the sea!

High on the jagged peak, that sheer o'erhangs
The pool where curves the eddy's backward sweep,
And stirs the long sea-weed that waves far down
Where star-fish wander o'er the trembling sands,
She stands, the fisher's bride, to watch the sail
That, brown against the sky, and growing less,
Glides round the distant hill,
Where, through the lonely lea,
The winding brooklet, murmuring, flows to meet the sea!

Then from her misty home the twilight comes
And wraps the waiting world in tender gloom,
And flickering lights from out the hamlet peep,
And weary babes are lulled, and warm hearths glow;
And slow the round moon, climbing up the sky,
With silver flecks the clouds and strews the wave,
And tips the distant hill,—
As through the drowsy lea,
The winding brooklet, sighing, steals to meet the sea!

But ere the night her silent watch hath passed,
Up from their ocean bed the wild winds spring,
And fierce before them drive the leaping waves,
And dash them, white and death-fraught, 'gainst the cliffs!
And all the sky is blackness—and afar
Th' uprooted trees crash through the forest lone
That skirts the distant hill,—
And on the storm-swept lea
The winding brooklet, shudd'ring, starts to meet the sea!

The dawn has come, and on the jagged peak
That overhangs the pool, the fisher's bride
Stands watching for the sail will bear him back;
But where the rising sun shines on the bay,
Far out, there floats a spar—dark mid the gleam,—
Lone remnant of the boat that never more
Will pass the distant hill,
Whence through the weary lea
The winding brooklet, moaning, sweeps to meet the sea!

Clear is the sheltered pool beneath the peak,
Though swift and strong its foam-flecked eddy whirls,
And deep and far below, where white sands gleam,
Amid the tangled weed, she sees—she sees—

Him—him—for whom all through the night she prayed!
Him—him—she loved o'er all the world beside!—
Ah me! the dreary hill!
Ah me! the desert lea!
Oh, winding brooklet, wailing, creep to meet the sea!

MELENSA.

Milla Torres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY FIVE.

CHAPTER XVI

A BLAST O' THE WIND.

WHEN Barbara awoke from her sleep of exhaustion, the first idea that succeeded the bewildered one of wondering how she came to have gone to bed with all her clothes on, was, that whatever came of this strange episode, Nancy must not know. She lay still a few minutes, trying, in the stillness and darkness, so to steady her nerves that she might meet her young sister with an untroubled face. Then she rose up, and kneeling for one moment at her bedside she put up a swift, silent prayer for help and strength in this new emergency; and then groping her way through the dark room she went quietly down stairs. By little and little, through the long, solitary years passed in the old house, there had been growing in Barbara's mind the sense of an unseen, ever-present Helper, to whom she could turn alike in joy and grief. I think it was the intense human need for some one to go to who should understand, and her instinctive shrinking from opening her heart to any sympathy that did not so understand, that had first driven her to that invisible, unchanging, all-comprehending Friend. As we have seen in our conversations with old Peggy, Barbara had hardly yet dared to acknowledge to herself that she was "one of His," and yet it was to *Him* she now always instinctively turned in her hours of need. Those few words of prayer,—hardly more, or more explicit than the "Lord, help me," of the blind man of old, calmed and strengthened her, and she groped her way down the dark stairs with a feeling as if some mighty voice had spoken above the tumult of her

heart, as it spoke of old to the stormy waves of Galilee, saying—"Peace, be still!" She went first into the hall, expecting to see Nancy there, but finding it deserted she at once surmised that she had taken refuge in old Elspet's kitchen, and thither she followed her.

"Well, Barbara," said Nancy, as she entered, "you've had a nice nap. When did you come in? I found you fast asleep on your bed an hour ago; you must have tired yourself out with your ramble, you naughty girl."

"Aye, and ye're looking as white's a ghaist," added Elspet. "I'll hae nane o' thae goings on, Miss Barbara. The Colonel ll be flightin' on me like wud, when he comes frae the south, gin ye misguide yersel that gate."

Barbara smiled gently, as she sat down on the old-fashioned fender; "Don't scold, Elspet," she said, "I believe I *did* tire myself a little too much with my walk, but I've had my nap, and I'm all right again."

"You must have gone a long way to tire yourself so," said Nancy, "you who are such a good walker; if it had been poor silly me, I shouldn't have wondered. Where did you go to?"

"Only to the kirkyard, to see old Peggy's grave."

"Only to the kirkyard! why, that's nothing of a walk for you. I suspect you've been sitting thinking on Peggy's grave, and *that's* tired you, not the walk," said Nancy,—"now, confess."

"I did sit there a while; old Mr Mackay was there, and I had a chat with him. What a dear old man he is! I think he looks upon that kirkyard, where his wife and the little children he lost so long ago are lying, as his only home, till he gets to the Home where he believes they are."

"There, now! I told you, it's the thinking, not the walking, that tired you."

"I'm feart ye hae gottin a blast o' the win,' sittin' there on the cauld yearth, Miss Barbara. It's a clean temptin' o' Providence. Ye'll just tak' a cup o' marjoram tea, and pit your feet i' het water afore ye gae to your bed the nicht," said old Elspet, looking up anxiously from her knitting.

"Indeed, I don't need it, Elspet, I don't feel as if I had taken any cold."

"'Deed but ye'll just do't, Miss Barbara; them kirkyards is ill-faured places, mony a yin's gotten his death there;

my gude-sister's cousin cam' by his that gate, stannin' wi's hat off his heed, a guid half-hour by the clock, wi' an ill-faured loon o' a presbyterian man, that had mair win' nor wits, pray'in ower the puir lad's grandfaither."

Barbara smiled, she saw it was no use protesting, so she submitted quietly to her old nurse's nursing, and drank the hot marjoram tea as she was bid, and allowed her feet to be steeped in hot water, to Elspet's heart's content. The old woman fussed about, quite in her element, till she had seen Barbara safely stowed away under the blankets, with a hot-water bottle at her feet, and an untold accumulation of bed-clothes, to counterbalance the supposed "blast of the wind;" then, with a contented heart, she went away again to the kitchen. To say the truth, Barbara was not altogether unwilling to take advantage of the old woman's anxiety, to creep quietly away back again to her own silent room, where she need no longer wear a mask or act a part, but, now that the first wild tumult of feeling had partly subsided, might quietly face the naked truth. A bright fire of wood and peats, piled and tended by Elspet's careful hands, was burning in the old-fashioned grate, and threw its weird flickering shadows through the otherwise dark room. Barbara watched them, half unconsciously, as they rose and fell, now throwing up little bright jets of flame that lighted up all the room, and anon sinking down into red embers, and leaving it in shadow. Very much the same struggle was going on to-night in Barbara's heart as had rent Alaster's on the night she was lost on Benvorlish. Like him, she had wandered unconsciously to the brink of a precipice, and her eyes had opened to her danger, only as she stood on the very edge. Like him, she recognised at last, that what she had deluded herself by calling sisterly affection for the man who was to be her brother, was nothing less than love. To her, the discovery came with even a greater surprise and horror than it had to Alaster. *She*, Barbara, who had promised her dead mother to be a mother to the motherless younger sister, who had watched over Nancy all her life, to whom the tender, loving, trusting child clung as to a rock of refuge, that *she* should be capable of doing her such deadly wrong! She shuddered as she thought of it, and even alone in her darkness the crimson blood flooded her cheek. There was no doubt in Barbara's mind, as there had been in Alaster's, as to what her course should be. The idea

never once crossed her mind of the possibility of purchasing her own happiness at the expense of her little sister's. Whatever came of it, *that* could never be. Her whole soul seemed consumed with the bitter shame that she should have so far forgotten herself as to let, however unconsciously, any such feeling towards her sister's lover creep into her heart. And yet, amid all her self reproach, a strange feeling would steal over her sometimes, of the sweetness and the fitness of this thing which could never be, and a strange throb of pleasure, mingled with the shame and the pain, as she recalled Alaster's passionate words, and felt again, in fancy, his passionate embrace. Then she tried to think of the future. *There*, all seemed perplexity, one thing only stood out clearly in her mind's eye as a fixed, unalterable resolve, however it was to be managed; whatever might happen—though her own heart broke in the struggle—God helping her, Nancy should never know. But how was it to be done? For herself she could promise, but how could she promise for Alaster? She remembered the wild passion in his face; how was she so to curb his love as well as her own, that her little sister might go on in peace? What if he utterly refused to listen to her, and told Nancy himself? Her heart thrilled with fear at the thought, and yet mingling with the fear came something that seemed almost like a wild hope;—if he did—if she could not prevent him—then, then, might it not be possible?

CHAPTER XVII.

A TAP AT THE WINDOW.

In the meantime, Nancy slept on in peace. Is it not often so that we pass through the very crises of our fate? close to mighty forces and strong passions which are working for our weal or woe, and ourselves utterly unconscious of it all; as unconscious as the babies of Bethlehem were of the fear and rage working in Herod's heart—what did they know about it? and yet how fraught it was with terrible consequences to them! So that night, while Barbara tossed on her feverish pillow, Nancy slept on, the sleep of youth and innocence. About midnight, the thought seized Barbara, that if she could *see* Nancy—the child she had brought up, and watched over, and

cared for, the little sister who clung to her as to a guardian angel—the sight would kill for ever this wild longing which was tearing her heart to pieces; so she rose softly, and wrapping herself in a plaid, slipt quietly from her own room to Nancy's. It was a bright moonlight night, the shutters in her sister's room were wide open as usual, and the white moonlight lay in long streaks on the floor, and flooded with its quiet light the little white bed where Nancy was lying. The bright young head, with its masses of flowing chestnut hair, stood out in strong relief on the white pillow, and the moonlight formed a sort of halo round the sweet, childish face, where a half smile lingered about the rosy lips. Barbara stood silently looking down on the quiet, happy, sleeping face, and the old motherly feeling for the motherless child rushed over her heart, and seemed to drown in its generous flood the passionate longing for personal happiness that was struggling for life within her. By and bye the rosy lips opened, and a sweet smile broke all over the sleeping face, and Nancy said quite distinctly—

"Oh Barbara! I am so happy—Alaster has come back." The words sent a guilty pang through Barbara's heart as she remembered what his coming back had been, and she sunk on her knees, by her sister's bedside, and, burying her face in the clothes, prayed long and earnestly for strength so to act, that, after all, her young sister's sleeping words might prove true, and that Alaster might really go back to her, and the sweet, childish heart never have its happy sunshine clouded by the knowledge how far away he had been. Her prayer over, Barbara still continued kneeling by the bedside, half-dozing, half-dreaming, for a great peace seemed to have crept over her wearied soul, till she heard Nancy moving in her sleep, and fearing she might wake and find her there, she rose and crept silently back to her own room.

When the sisters met the following morning at the breakfast table, and exchanged their morning kiss, Nancy remarked that Barbara's embrace was tenderer than usual, and that her kiss lingered longer and more lovingly on her brow; she was quieter too, but when she did speak, there was something in her manner gentler and sweeter than usual. Elspet looked at her anxiously, and said—

"Ye're no lookin' yersel yet, Miss Barbara, ye've no gotten quit o' that blast o' the win', I'm thinkin'."

"I'm sure I was very dutiful, Elspet," said Barbara,

smiling gently, "I drank every drop of your marjoram tea, and I'm sure it was quite bad enough to have cured me if I needed curing."

"Bad enough! quo' she?" exclaimed Elspet, indignantly, "ye're sainted mither, God rest her soul, wad ne'er hae misnamed *my* marjoram tea that gate, Miss Barbara, she aye said, 'Gie me Elspet's marjoram tea, she's the best hand at it i' the country-side,'"—and Elspet turned her back in offended dignity.

"No, no, Elspet, I didn't mean to doubt *your* marjoram tea being the very best of its kind; all the old folk know you're the best doctor in the country-side,—it was only to marjoram tea in general that I objected."

"Aye, aye," grumbled Elspet, in a somewhat milder tone, evidently considerably mollified by Barbara's adroit compliment to her powers as a doctor, "it's the tea itsel' ye're findin' faut wi', is it? that's the way wi' a' the young folk, they're that wise i' their ain conceit, its nocht but new-fangled medicines for them, wi' fine French names to them: the auld drugs that their forbears used to drink ilk evening for a nicht-cap afore they gaed to bed, and bonny men an' braw leddies they were, and leeved out a' their days, an' ne'er an ache or a pain till fourscore an' ten, are no half guid enough for them, I'se warrant." Elspet stopped, out of breath with her long harangue, and Barbara went up and kissed the old woman kindly.

"No, no, Elspet, you know better than that, I'm not doubting the great benefits of your marjoram tea, only I don't like the taste much, you know." Elspet shook her head, evidently mollified, yet doubtful whether it were consistent with the proper upholding of her testimony, to be satisfied with such a qualified acquiescence in the virtues of her favourite drug.

After breakfast, the sisters sat down to their spinning wheels in the hall. The bright hoar frost was glittering on the grass and trees outside in the chill winter sunshine. Nancy sat singing at her wheel, snatches now of an old ballad the sisters had often sung with Alaster, these last happy autumn evenings, now of some grand old chant they had practised together for the service in church. The table-cloths their hands were busy spinning were for Alaster and Nancy; everything seemed connected with him, Barbara thought, as she looked silently across from her own work to the happy, bright, little face bending

over the wheel on the other side of the great fire-place. Many thoughts were struggling in Barbara's heart that morning,—fear, and shame, and perplexity, and under them all a strange, wild throb of happiness which, much as she tried to keep it under, now and then *would* force itself to the surface, and threaten to drown them all in its overflowing flood. In her inmost soul, she recognised the fact, that it was a great misfortune which had befallen her—a misfortune which she dimly foresaw stretching on through all the coming years—a dire misfortune to herself, threatening the utter wreck of all her personal happiness, even if she were strong enough and brave enough so to control herself and others, that the wreck should include no happiness but her own. This morning, as last night, only one resolve was firm within her—that come what would, Nancy should be taken care of, Nancy should never know; and she quietly faced the truth, that in order to do this, she must lay down all hope of personal happiness for herself, not for a time only, however long, but absolutely and for ever—for ever, at least in this world—in another, who shall say how "the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places smooth?" Yet under it all, under all the pain and the perplexity, whence came that strange throb of happiness? Barbara's was not a nature to shrink from a great sacrifice, and as she sat there that winter morning over her spinning wheel, with no word of pain on her lips, and no visible emotion in her face, just as usual, only perhaps a little quieter and paler than her wont, she was nerving herself for as true a martyrdom as any covenanter who had walked singing to the stake. There are many such martyrs in the world, noble men and women who have laid their life's happiness down at the call of duty, and said no word, from whose faces the gentle smile has never faded, on whose kindly tongue the loving word has never faltered, as they "buried their dead joy, and lived above it with a living world." There are many such sacrifices, even in this commonplace "work-a-day world," unknown and unnoticed here; yet I think that by and bye, when we come face to face with the "noble army of martyrs," we shall recognise many a face that we little thought to find in that glorious band.

By and bye, Nancy got up from her spinning, and went upstairs to get some more yarn. She had scarcely left the room, when Barbara heard the tap of a riding whip

against the window, and, turning round, she saw Alaster standing outside. He beckoned to her to open the window, and, trembling all over, she rose to do so.

"Barbara," he said, in a hurried whisper, "I have waited all morning to get a chance to speak to you; I have been watching at the window for an hour and more. I *must* speak to you. Come and meet me at the stone under the birch tree; I will wait there till you come."

Barbara hesitated; she did not know whether or not it was right to go, but before she had time to decide, she heard Nancy coming singing downstairs; and with another emphatic "I will wait till you come," Alaster had disappeared behind the corner of the house.

"Dear me, Barbara," said Nancy, as she came in, "you must be in love with Elspet's marjoram tea after all, she'll be sure to give you another dose of it to-night if she sees you standing at an open window this cold day."

Barbara muttered something about feeding the robins, then, shutting the window hastily, she went upstairs. Though she had hesitated at Alaster's request to meet him in the glen, a moment's thought convinced her that an explanation with him was absolutely necessary, and she felt instinctively that the sooner it was over the better. So, though her hands trembled so that she could hardly fasten on her thick winter shoes, or tie the strings of her broad straw hat, and made the operation of dressing a much longer one than usual, she managed to get them on at last, and after one hurried moment of silent prayer at her bedside, she slipt quietly downstairs and out of the house. She feared that Nancy would miss her, and wonder that she had gone out without telling her of her intention to do so; but that seemed preferable to the risk of Nancy's offering to accompany her, should she tell her she was going for a walk. Once clear of the house, she walked rapidly on towards the burn-side.

The place Alaster had chosen for their rendezvous was the very spot to which Barbara had been used to come to weep by herself over her childish sorrows. She had told Alaster once of that sanctum of hers, though she had never spoken of it to any one else, for somehow she always felt as if there were very few things which she could not say to Alaster; not that she purposely made a confidant of him, or formally told him what she made a secret of with others, but she had always felt that she could let herself out to him in a way she had never been

able to do to any one else, and this possibility of being *herself* with him had been perhaps what attracted her more to him than anything that he actually said or did. It was with some dim instinctive idea of this, I think, that Alaster had chosen this spot for their meeting-place at this crisis of their fate.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNDER THE BIRCH TREE.

As Barbara came in sight of the place of rendezvous, she saw Alaster's tall figure leaning against the stem of the old birch tree. She was trembling all over with excitement, and her heart was throbbing so that she could hear and count its beats, but she never hesitated in her rapid walk. She was close beside him before Alaster seemed to notice her approach, then, at the sound of her step, he turned round towards her. His face was pale and haggard as though he had not slept; the wild passion that had burned in it yesterday seemed to have faded away into a sort of dreary despondency much more painful to look at. He put out his hand to Barbara without speaking, and she laid hers hesitatingly in it. Somehow, yesterday's revelation seemed so to have changed the relations of these two, who had been before as intimate as brother and sister, that now Barbara almost felt as if she were guilty of a crime in shaking hands with him. He felt how the little hand she gave him was trembling, and a great tenderness flooded his heart and looked out of his dark eyes, as he closed his fingers tightly over the trembling little capture. He held it fast—she could not draw it away from him had she wished to do so, and she was not unwilling to feel that she could not. He looked long and earnestly into her eyes before he said a word, then when the sweet eyes dropped under his gaze, he drew the unresisting girl to his heart and held her closely there. She could not free herself from his arms—I think she did not wish to do so. She had made up her mind this was to be their first interview and their last of this sort—only this once in all a life time—then she must brace herself up for the dreary future. It would be something to think of then that *once* he had held her to his heart. True and simple to the core, the idea never entered Barbara's mind that it was

possible for her to deny her love for Alaster. Ashamed and pained as she was that such a feeling should have entered her heart towards her sister's betrothed, her simple, truthful nature at once recognised the fact that it was so and the idea of denying it never once crossed her thoughts The path of duty, the only possible path, seemed to her mind's eye quite clear at that moment, she had no doubt about what it was, her only doubt was as to her own courage to follow it She *could* not buy her own happiness at the cost of her little sister's—the thing was simply an impossibility not for once to be thought of. She must learn to be brave enough—Alaster must learn to be brave enough—to put this passionate love of theirs quietly behind them, and go on as if it had never been She did not see *how* it was to be done, that was all dark to her only one thing stood out strong and clear as daylight *however* it was to be it *must* be done but this once—on this first and last meeting, her love should have its way once in a whole long life-time she would let Alaster know what was burning in her heart and then for evermore she would keep silence One draught she must have of that intoxicating cup before she dashed it for ever in pieces So she let Alaster hold her to his heart For some minutes neither of them spoke Life's supreme moments are generally silent, and so these two, with so much to explain of the past, so much to arrange for the future, such a strange mingling of passionate pain and pleasure in the present, stood there silently heart to heart. Perhaps the two hearts so beating against each other explained more to one another in those silent moments than tongues could have done in many an hour's discourse. At length Alaster broke the silence. It did not seem to him, as it did to Barbara, that the thing was settled and irrevocable. He thought of this as the beginning rather than the end. If Barbara loved him, and he loved Barbara, then whatever came of it, it seemed to him that he and Barbara belonged to each other, and nothing in heaven or earth should be allowed to part them. What was a foolish former promise —a boyish fancy—that it should stand in the way of this? Poor little Mabel! he did not forget her—he was very sorry—his thought of her tenderly and playfully. She would [illegible] to her to marry her when he loved her dearly. He therefore reasoned with himself, and I am

not prepared to say that his reasoning was false, nay, I think it was true—only the thing was impossible. How could these two rejoice in their own happiness, when to buy it they had destroyed little Nancy's? Would not the whole of their future lives be but one long remorse? Alaster had got hold of one side of the truth, and Barbara had got hold of the other—for both sides were true—what was to be the upshot then between them? What was wholly true? How were these two conflicting truths to be reconciled?

"You *do* love me then, Barbara?" said Alaster at last, breaking the long silence. A scarcely audible "Yes" came from the fair face hidden on his breast. He bent his over it and covered the broad white brow with kisses.

"My darling, my darling," he murmured, "then come what will you are mine, nothing in heaven or earth shall part us."

Then Barbara raised herself from his breast, and looked him full in the face, the bright colour that his passionate words and kisses had called into her cheek fading suddenly to a deadly paleness, and an expression of amazement filling her soft eyes.

"Alaster," she said, "I do not understand you, what do you mean?" Alaster was staggered by her words and tones—he had failed to follow the workings of her mind, and he could not understand how loving him as she had just confessed she did, she should answer him thus.

"What do I mean, Barbara?" he said. "what should I mean, what could I mean but that you and I belong to each other, and that no one on earth has a right to come between us? You are my wife, Barbara, you and I are one already." She started from him as if his words had stung her.

"Your wife, Alaster?—never—Nancy is your wife," she said, and her tone sounded hard and cold, as she turned dreamily away.

"Barbara! Barbara!" he exclaimed, seizing both her hands, "what do you mean? do not drive me mad! I tell you I love *you*, not Nancy—you have just told me that you love *me*, then is it not true that we belong to each other? in God's sight you are my wife now. Barbara, what is any foolish boyish fancy that it should stand between those whose hearts He has joined?"

"But Nancy?" she stammered. His words took her by surprise, she had never looked at that side of the question.

"And Nancy, too," he answered, "would it be true to her, Barbara, that I should marry her, when I know in my heart that it is *you* I love?"

She was silent—this was altogether a new view of the matter. Could it then be, that after all, this great sacrifice, for which she had nerved herself, was not required of her—that after all it would be the truest and the kindest thing, even to Nancy, to prevent her marrying this man who loved another? For one moment she felt as if a great load had been lifted from her heart as she thought of this possibility, the possibility that after all there might be this great happiness in store for her; all life seemed brightened up as with a sudden burst of sunlight as she thought of it, but in another moment the clouds closed round again, and the sudden light of hope died out in her heart.

"No, no, it would break her heart, Alaster,—it cannot be," she said, drawing away her hands from his.

"Barbara, Barbara!" he pleaded, "I beseech you think what you are doing—if you will not think of my happiness—or of your own—think of Nancy's! Is it fair to *her* that I should perjure myself at God's altar by promising to love her while my heart is full of another woman? Would it be true, would it be right, would it be even *kind* to her, Barbara?" She was silent for a few minutes, looking down at the burn that ran at their feet—he stood watching her anxiously. By and bye she raised her eyes again to his face.

"I do not know, Alaster, I cannot tell—it seems to me that what you say is true—there is a great wrong somewhere, and I do not know whether marrying Nancy will right it—we have been very wicked, I am afraid," she added simply, looking up at him with her clear truthful eyes, "and we have done Nancy a great wrong, whether she ever knows it or not. I do not know what is right or what is true now, I only know that I *cannot* do it, I cannot take Nancy's happiness from her and be happy with it myself. I should hate myself if I did, and perhaps I should come to hate *you* too—if Nancy is not to be happy, nobody must be happy." She paused a little, and then when Alaster did not speak, she went on, almost in an apologetic tone,—"I am very sorry, Alaster, for you, but I can't help it—you see you don't know what Nancy and I have been to each other; our dead mother left her to me to take care of,—how could I meet her in heaven if I had

robbed Nancy of her happiness?" Alaster had turned away, he was leaning against the great stone with his face buried in his hands; the despondency of his attitude touched Barbara, she went a step towards him, and put her hand on his arm.

"I am *very* sorry, Alaster," she said, imploringly, "but you see I can't help it."

"Then what is to be done?" he said, turning drearily towards her. She had no answer ready, and he went on, "I can't stay here and pretend to make love to Nancy, and see you every day and say nothing—I *can't* do it, Barbara, I must go away." She paused a moment before she answered, and her face grew very pale; then she said in a low voice,—

"Yes, Alaster, I think it will be better so—for a little."

"For a little!" he said scornfully, "is that all you know about love like mine? How can I *ever* come back? How can I ever think of you as a sister again?" She was silent. She felt in her own heart how hard this thing would be of which he spoke, and yet if she was to keep her vow that Nancy should not know, it must be even so. Alaster went on—"I will join the Prince's army, it is going to move south; perhaps there may be no need for me ever to decide about coming back." A thrill of terror shot through Barbara's heart at the words, and banished every shade of colour from her cheek, but she said no word of opposition. "Good-bye, then, Barbara," he said, catching her once more in his arms and covering her face with wild kisses, then loosing her suddenly he strode off down the glen, leaving her standing, half stunned, under the birch tree.

CHAPTER XIX.

BARBARA'S CROSSNESS.

THE Jacobite army were at this time on their disastrous march to Derby. Alaster's father was with them. He had left his son to keep alive the Jacobite feeling among his people in Perthshire, and to be ready at his call to join the Prince's force, with those of his clan who still remained in their native glens. But now Alaster felt that this life of inaction would be intolerable to him, and he resolved, as he strode rapidly down the glen after his interview with Barbara, that he would not await his

father's orders, but would himself at once proceed to join the invading army. He knew that his father would be displeased, but he must brave that; with this wild passion raging in his heart he *could* not remain inactive, if he did not *do* something he felt he should go mad. His mind was all in a tumult. As to the future, one thing only seemed evident to him, that if Barbara was not to be his wife, he must never see her again. What then was to be done about his promise to Nancy? That question he put aside for the present, he saw no way to answer, and he would not trouble himself about it in the meantime; he was going to join the Prince's army on an expedition full of danger, it might be, I think he almost hoped that it *would* be, unnecessary ever to answer it. On coming to Aberdeenshire at this time, he had not gone to Carrick Castle; he wished his interviews with Barbara to take place without any one knowing, and he could not have trusted his kindly, gossiping cousin, Lady Mac-Donald, to keep his secret; so, for the two nights which he had spent in the neighbourhood, he had put up at a little roadside inn, twenty miles on the other side of Milla Forres, where he was comparatively little known. He had tied his horse to a tree at the foot of the glen, before watching at the window of Milla Forres for a word with Barbara, and there he again found it when his interview was over. He mounted and rode rapidly away. As he passed the last turn in the road where he could get a glimpse of the old house peeping out from its thick environment of ancient trees, he drew in his horse, and stood looking at it long and earnestly. There was a misty film before his eyes, when at last, with a long drawn breath, and a deep sigh, he turned his back upon it and rode away. Hero had to do both rider's and horse's work for a mile or two, for her rider neither saw the road she was going, nor heeded where her head was turned. Alaster was a strong man and a brave one—a man who could have walked calmly up to a cannon's mouth, or cheered on a forlorn hope—but as he turned his back that afternoon on Milla Forres, in the gathering gloom of the wintry twilight, the mist that blinded his eyes gradually changed into great tear drops, that fell slowly one by one on Hero's neck. Hero seemed to feel that something was wrong with her master, and she picked her steps carefully over the uneven road, as though she knew that she had to take care of him, and was on

honour to do it to the best of her ability; so, when Alaster's half-trance of grief was over, he found himself safe within a mile of the little inn where he had passed the night. The sonsy guidwife came out to meet him as he rode up, bustling and eager to know what the stranger "shentleman" would be pleased to want for supper, and hoping for a friendly crack and gossip while laying the table; for Alaster was a great favourite with all those humble folk with whom he came in contact, his frank, courteous manner, courteous alike to high and low, no less than his handsome person made him many friends among his humbler neighbours, especially among the women part of them, most of whom were accustomed to describe him in their highest manner of approbation as "a rael bonny mon." So the landlady of the *Cross Keys* was sorely disappointed when Alaster seemed deaf to her hints at conversation, and peremptorily declared that he should set out on his journey immediately, and without waiting for supper. "It's a clean temptin' o' Providence," muttered the good woman, as she turned away baffled from her attempts to alter his resolution, "the lad maun be fey riding aff that gate, wi' an empty stamach, an' no sae muckle as a drap o' Glenlivat to wat his whistle. Guid kens whaur he's been the day, I misdoot he's been after nae guid."

JEANIE MORISON.

(*To be continued.*)

"They were troubled, saying, It is a Spirit."

All secrets lie within his downcast eyes,
All silence sitteth on his quiet mouth;
Cycles of years, which pass o'er Paradise,
Have left no trace upon his wondrous youth;

His brows are crownëd with the poppy wreath,
The asphodel he beareth in his hand,
A dark-browed angel, and his name is Death,
Yet brings he tokens from the sunlight land.

His dusky wings are folden, and his feet
Are swift and soundless, as they pass along
The chequered shade and sunshine of the street,
As bells are chiming unto Evensong.

He pauseth at the gate, gay voices cease,
His hand is on the latchet of the door,
He standeth on the threshold, saying, "Peace,"
And peace, in coming, comes for evermore.

Our heart beats faint, our breath grows chill with fright,
The other world doth touch us fearfully—
As those who saw, i' the first watch of the night,
A spirit walk the Galilean sea.

We fain would stay awhile to work and weave
The web of life, which promises so fair—
The little ones cling round whom we must leave,
The sun sheds golden kisses on their hair.

He bids us rise, he brooketh no delay,
Though the glad spring is waking o'er the earth,
With faint pink flushes on each apple spray,
And the sweet treble of the wild birds' mirth.

We fain would see the summer, we would fain
Comfort ourselves on mother earth's warm breast;
We hear the summons with a sudden pain—
"Arise and go, for this is not your rest."

So at the last lay we our hand in his,
Content to go, if it must needs be thus;
Hushed to our ears are earth's sweet melodies,
And her fair sights are dark for aye to us.

We go with him, from out the noise of life,
Unto the silence of the other shore—
From stirring sounds of motion and of strife,
Where strife and motion cease for evermore.

We go with him,—ah, happy if at last,
When fear is hushed in awe and mystery,
With voice we loved and longed for in the past,
Our Guide, at Heaven's gate, saith, "Peace, it is I."

R.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

Part III.—(*Continued*).

Algiers, as Raoul saw it in the last days of its independence, was not the modernised half-European city of the

present time. It was then, with all its beauty, the gloomy gateway of a mysterious land, chiefly known in Europe by legends of Moslem cruelty and Christian suffering and slavery. The grim windowless houses, so secretive and forbidding without, were within rich with all the wealth of the East, the luxurious homes of the fierce pirates, who had for the last 300 years desolated all the neighbouring lands. Raoul, in his capacity of doctor, was taken to see some Christian slaves, who worked in chains under a burning sun on the fortifications; the last of a long succession of obscure martyrs, who for centuries had toiled under the lash of their hard task-masters, the Turks. A renegade was there to watch that Raoul had no unnecessary communication with the slaves; such perverts there always were, but how few compared with the thousands who had remained firm to their faith through a hard captivity. The French blockade, which was drawn ever tighter, was filling the minds of the slaves with hope. Algiers had hardly any communication with the outer world. Raoul could not profit by what there was, for he was speedily taken by his master, Mustafa bou-Mezrag, to his own government at Medeah, a town on the slopes of the Atlas, some sixty miles to the south. Here he lived for some months in the Bey's palace, finding his only interest in studying Arabic, and curing Turks and Arabs.

Then came a day in June when he was recalled to Algiers, where his services were needed by the wounded; for the French army had landed, and was besieging the town. Great was Raoul's disappointment when, about the tenth day of the siege, the wily Bey of Tittery, seeing clearly what the result would be, left Algiers with all his followers, and while fixing his own headquarters at Medeah, sent his wives, treasures, and household—Raoul among them—to the oasis city of El Argouath, far in the south. For Mustafa, while determined not to submit to the French, realised better than they did what a stupendous conquest they had made, and how all Algeria lay in their hands had they but known how to grasp it, when once they had seized the centre of government.

El Argouath was a ten days' ride from Algiers, an island of verdure, palms and orange woods, watered by abundant springs. Around it lay on every side the sandy desert, taking strange impressions and varieties of colour from the light which there fell on it, transforming and disintegrating with a magic power the dim local colouring.

Among the sombre Arabs Raoul lived a silent, lonely life. There was little for him to do, and his active northern temperament could not attain to the oriental calm of the Arabs, who would sit meditating, or rather vegetating, in the same picturesque attitude for hours, quite content to do nothing at all. Raoul would pace uneasily the limits where the sand actually bordered the oasis as a sea edges the shore. That waste of sand, with an occasional low rock glimmering with white salt, seemed waiting and pining for the fresh sea waves, as he did for life, for companionship, for Gabrielle. Even she would have been satisfied could she have known how he dwelt on her saucy, winsome ways, her loving, truthful nature; not unmixed with a harassing fear that their last dispute should be counted by her as a serious quarrel, and that he should find himself forgotten when he returned. That little dispute, like a gnat in the lens of a telescope, now loomed as a kind of monster in the eyes of both Raoul and Gabrielle, marring the shining landscape of their loves, and proving that imaginative people, who care for each other, should never leave a difference unadjusted. Raoul could get little information from the Arabs, but he rightly conjectured that the conquests of his countrymen had caused the Bey to send him so far off, and when the autumn and winter had passed by, and he was told that with a small escort he was to ride back to Medeah, he guessed the truth that they had met with some reverses.

It was now February, and pleasant travelling in South Algeria. Something of enjoyment came to Raoul, as he paced along on an active barb; he was dressed much as we are accustomed to see the Zouaves, in bournous and fez; his close-clipped hair, long moustache, and bronzed face making him not unlike the Moors and Turks in his company, among whom, however, he was always known as the German doctor. One evening they rode late, hoping to reach Medeah without bivouacking again. The night was cool and calm; in the spacious sky the stars were scintillating with wonderful brilliancy, and the planets seemed suspended like round silver lamps. Southwards lay the changeless waste of the desert, a few palms drawn in silhouette against the far horizon; to the north were the woodlands and rugged rocks of the Tell; and the deep roar of the lion, or sharper cry of the panther, roused by the tramp of horses, told how wild was the land. Then they were met by a party of horsemen, headed, as it soon

appeared, by the Bey himself, who presently called Raoul up alongside of him.

"My son," he began in Arabic, which Raoul now spoke with ease, "I have seen your skill in fetching back men from the very gates of death, therefore I have recalled you to Medeah where we have many wounded men. But they, as well as the brave who have been slain, have their reward. The Franks are in full retreat, and will soon be driven into the sea. Now mark what I say. Our physicians were once the best in the world, but we have stood still while in Europe the multitude of diseases has led to many discoveries; here you can make your fortune, and teach others; from me, you shall receive horses of good race, and a wife as fair and docile; only conform to our faith, and the thing is done."

"Turn Mussulman!" said Raoul.

"Outwardly," answered Mustafa. "The wise man knows that religion, as concerns man and God, lives in each man's heart alone; each must think what he thinks. But, as it concerns man and man, it is the strongest of outward links, and demands the submission of the man to the nation. Our faith is good for us; yours may be good for you in Germany, but you have lost your country; adopt ours—your thoughts are still your own. If Mahomet was no prophet, his name is now a power; own that truth, and it is enough."

"Those who change their faith for wordly advantage are called by us renegades; a word of shame, my lord," said Raoul.

"Those who deny the prophet, are called slaves by us," said the Bey. "They *are* slaves, by Allah, a bad *thing*—not a bad name. The men here murmur at my indulgence for you; submit to some, if you will, unmeaning forms, and they shall kiss your hand and hold your stirrup—for I like you, you shall be as a son to me, and riches and power shall be yours."

"My lord," said Raoul, "spare your offers. I am a Christian from belief—not merely because I was born in a Christian land"—and as he said so he felt it; the old teachings of his mother in Alsace seemed to live again, free from the passing cloudiness of the Quartier Latin, and the bustle of a busy life. In the vast spaces and solitudes of the desert, men learn to think, and the essential fidelity of Raoul's nature had had time to assert itself. "And further, my lord," he continued, with heightened colour,

"put me in chains, and you may get a slave's work out of me, but the free art of healing I will abjure—I will never in that case advise or tend your people more."

"How hot are these young men!" said Mustafa—"go, you shall have the freedom of the town as before, only beware how you leave it."

Raoul, as he reined back his horse, resolved to bend his mind seriously to plans for escape, fearing further restraint. Now a flush stole over the cold blue of the sky, and in a few minutes the first sunbeams lit the square piles of masonry upon the height which formed the town of Medeah, and threw the shadows of the aquaduct arches far across the plain.

The town was full of wounded, and Raoul, after a hard day of attendance on them, a work he always enjoyed, had stretched himself in his bournous beneath an arcade of the Bey's palace, when he was roused by an old Arab woman, who touched him on the shoulder, and implored him to come and see two more sick men in her house. She led him to the door of a little mean house, through a small court, and then lifting a curtain disclosed a little dark room, where two men lay on cushions on the floor. "I ought to kill them, or bring some one to do it—but I cannot—they begged so hard for water, and now I have given them drink, I cannot kill them—you, great doctor, cure them, and send them away." She spoke as if confessing an unamiable weakness. One man was a Kabyle in the French service, suffering from an open gunshot wound—the other was a bright-eyed French gamin hurt in the foot. Raoul was soon in eager conversation with the latter. Algiers had fallen, of course; also several towns to the south; the French had even occupied Medeah, but had been compelled to withdraw hastily, leaving some of their wounded behind. Those were generally despatched by these useful drudges, the Arab wives; but the bold widow, who had found the two men, was making great efforts to save their lives. Further, the Frenchman told Raoul that the tricolor was once more the national flag—and of the glorious accession of the citizen king, —"of whom," remarked the little soldier, "I am the equal."

Six busy weeks for our young doctor now slipped by; he organised an hospital, and worked indefatigably at training the Arabs in practical surgery, for amid all his longings for liberty he was keenly interested in his patients. The two French ones he visited with all the

precautions of a plover watching over its nest, not for their own sakes only, but because he saw in them guides to freedom and France. But one day he found both his birds were flown; the little Frenchman calculated he could better escape without the well-known German doctor; the Kabyle, more grateful, had got employment in tending horses, that he might find an opportunity of securing two for their escape. One night's ride across the Atlas by defiles he knew well, would bring them the following day to Blidah, where the French had a garrison. All was at last arranged; Raoul one afternoon feigned illness, and desired he might be left undisturbed in his room till the following morning. The old Arab woman had furnished him with a complete Arab costume—and so attired, with blackened hands and a bournous over his head, he slipped out into the street with her, and together they passed through the gate, she explaining that this was her son with whom she was going to the date harvest on the Tell. They walked to a little Marabout temple, three miles beyond the town, and there waited till darkness fell. The welcome sound of rapid hoofs soon told them the Kabyle had succeeded in bringing off the horses, and Raoul, bidding farewell to the old woman, mounted and felt himself free once more. They rode all night as fast as the darkness and wild mountain tracks permitted, and next morning were descending one of the last spurs of the Atlas, where the mountains sank into the plain of the Metidja. Raoul reined up his horse with a cry of delight. The flat country stretched away northwards interspersed with bushes and rocks, and darkening into forest on the horizon. The mountains lay behind them now; not far off a river left their shelter, and its silver course trended away to the west. But more than the fair view in the April sunshine to Raoul, was a little square white block-house on a rock, just where the pass debouched on the plain; for on it waved the tricolour. Moreover, that plain was no solitary landscape, but alive with the glitter of a most picturesque warfare. Far and wide a goum, or body of irregular Arab cavalry, were scattered; now drawing together in a column, again scattering like an opened fan; sometimes a single cavalier would dart out, suddenly stop his horse in full career and discharge his piece, and then scour away swiftly to a safe distance: from what? Raoul saw by degrees more distinctly a compact column of French light cavalry moving steadily

towards the block-house. Only about a hundred strong; but they had their own Arabs hovering in their rear, and charging the others at intervals. They paid little heed to the demonstrations of the hostile horsemen, whose balls seemed to fall short of their ranks; only once while Raoul watched, they halted and charged a compacter body of Arabs than usual, which however dispersed before them like a swarm of flies, when one tries to grasp it. One thing was very strange; immediately in the rear of the block-house, but concealed by it and the gorge from the French, a number of Arabs were gathered, as if in ambuscade. Why did the garrison not notice them; was their ammunition all expended? As Raoul puzzled over this circumstance, he suddenly perceived that he and his Kabyle were surrounded by mounted Arabs. For this contingency he was prepared, and the Kabyle was already explaining that they were bearers of a message from the Bey of Tittery to Ben Zamoun, then commanding in the field. Raoul showed a letter addressed to the latter, an innocent forgery, which was beheld by the Arabs with the respect which writing wins, where it is an unknown art. Ben Zamoun they explained was now at Blidah, whence the French garrison had retreated. This was bad news, but as the Kabyle said when the Arabs had left them, it was only making a detour to avoid the skirmish, and then pushing on at night for Algiers.

"I rather think of stopping here, and at night going to the blockhouse," said Raoul.

"They have just told me," answered the Kabyle, "that the block-house is taken too. The flag is left up as a snare. When the Franks come within gunshot, the marksman within will pick off their men. They hope to shoot down the officers, and then they can surround the men in a moment with their ambuscade; it is said without their officers they often lose heart We shall see all well here."

Raoul's indignant answer, couched in strong language, drew from his guide a deprecating—"What will my lord; Allah Kerim! we can do nothing; it would be too dangerous to ride across, but to-morrow we can get to Algiers and give information."

"Go to Algiers, then, I am going to warn the cavalry," answered Raoul; and, dismounting, he began to scramble down the gorge, leading his horse. This was no case for deliberation, whatever the risk he must have tried it, but disguised as he was, he thought he had a fair chance of

riding safely to the French column. He was unarmed, but breaking a stick out of the brushwood, he tied on it a shred of his white bournous, and when he reached the plain, he remounted, and rode in a nonchalant manner through the crowd of horsemen. Happily, he attracted no attention save from an old Sheik, who rode alongside for a little way, recognising him as the Bey's physician, and who, on hearing that he was the bearer of an urgent message, actually offered to change horses with him—"Mine is quite fresh, and as good as yours, which is spent," he said. Raoul accepted with many grateful thanks, which he thought with amusement would make the old Sheik furious on the morrow, and was soon caracoling on a fresh horse among the cavaliers of the goum. There was not a minute to lose; the French were getting near the blockhouse. Raoul galloped off straight towards them, and soon found himself free from the ruck of Arabs, and close to the flank of the French column. A puff of smoke in front warned him that they might mistake him for the boldest of the Arabs; so reining up, and waving the improvised white flag over his head, he shouted,—"Prisonnier." The nearest officer rode towards him, and Raoul dashed on. A discharge of fireams behind him, and a sharp twinge in the side told him the Arabs had detected the trick; but in another moment he had cannoned in among the French horsemen, and was safe. Voices sounded round him—"Vive le deserteur;" "tiens, il a le mors aux dents;" "Rendez vous;" "Can you speak French, l'ami."

"I am a Frenchman!" he shouted, somewhat hurt at this reception. "Where is the commandant? you don't know where you are going."

"Pardon me, but you have the air of an Arab to the tips of the fingers," said the lieutenant, as he made way for the captain to ride up, to whom Raoul eagerly gave his information. For a moment he looked hard at Raoul, then saying simply, "Many thanks, sir, stay near me," gave the necessary orders for reversing the line of march. No sooner did the Arabs perceive the manœuvre than with wild shouts they hauled down the French flag on the blockhouse, and the horsemen behind it joined the others in a disorderly charge. The French repelled it with little loss, and then retreating by alternate squadrons, soon extricated themselves from the enemy; or rather the Arabs, from some unknown reason, turned northwards, and in a short time all had disappeared.

"They are off to amuse themselves at Blidah," the captain remarked, "evidently Ben Zamoun is not here." He now divided his little force, giving the lieutenant the charge of a party, who, with Raoul, rode straight for their garrison. Late in the afternoon, after a long silent ride, they reached the Bordj, or fortified farm, for which they were bound—a large, white-walled enclosure, with one high tower. Here Raoul was taken to the commandant's own room, and sedulously waited on by a cheery soldier servant; soon he was resting in a comfortable camp bed, too tired to think or speak, but with a delicious consciousness of peace and satisfaction after long suffering, losing itself by degrees in a sweet and dreamless sleep. Even when he woke the following morning, it was to a sensation of bliss he scarcely cared to disturb by recalling the reasons. He was in a small, somewhat dark and lofty room; from a narrow, unglazed window in the thick wall, could be seen a glimpse of sunlit plain and serrated mountain, framed in intense shadow; a gaily striped curtain hung in the doorway; weapons decorated the walls; a lion skin the divan; moorish cups and vases of shining illuminated metals, strewed the tables; but the pleasantest sight of all was the person whose entrance had awakened him from his morning slumbers, and who indeed was destined greatly to influence his future life.

E. J. O.

(*To be continued.*)

Despair and Faith.

A LONELY mere—a vast expanse
Of leaden waters, where no lights dance
To the music of ripples along the shore,
Or the measured plash of the silvered oar;
Where no life stirs: e'en the breathless air
Is dense with the curse o'erhanging there;
Where the reeds which cling to the slimy bank
Are broken and leafless, and brown and dank;
Where the birds flitting over it stifle their song,
Nor dip in their wings as they flash along;
Where a brooding shadow seems ever to lie
Like the midnight gloom of a moonless sky.

A loveless life, where the ebb and flow
Of morning and evening come and go
With an aching weariness worse than pain,
Throbbing upon my troubled brain.
A joyless life, with the sun gone down.
And my hope like the reed-tops broken and brown,
With the youth crushed out of a heart too young
To be slain by the power of an evil tongue,
Turned from life and its pleasures to stone,
What is aught to me who am left alone?
Hopeless and godless; they speak to me
Of a Light in the darkness I cannot see,
But I have no guide, and I drift away
Further and further from day to day,
Till I reach at last that sunless shore,
Where I shall not awake to my misery more.

* * * * *

Broodeth a gloom on the ocean wide,
The sullen swell of a heaving tide,
A ragged rift in the mist that sweeps
The cloud that veileth still blacker deeps;
A broken boat—to whose mast there clings
A weary hand; while like darkling wings
Of some evil spirit of fell despair,
The sails flap loose in the laden air.
Oh life, that hearest, and hearest alone
The surf-like beat of grief's monotone!
The swell must die as the storm subsides,
And the morn will bear thee on silvery tides.
Oh hand, nigh hopeless! cling on through the dark,
Tho' lost be the tract of thy rudderless bark;
Oh God! let a ray from Thee, faint though it be,
Shine out from the shore where "there's no more sea."

The rift it widens, and shimmering pale
A star strikes down on the tattered sail,
The hand still clings, but how strained the grasp—
When lo! it meets with a loving clasp,
And One Who walketh the waters o'er
Saith, "I am with thee, fear no more,
And pastures green I've prepared for thee,
In that land of Mine where "there's no more sea."

MARTYN HAY.

A Sketch of the Sewing-Room,

In connection with the "Edinburgh Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor."

THIS account of the sewing-room, at 5 Roxburgh Place, is written in the hope that some of the readers of the "*Attempt*" magazine may be interested in it, and may be induced to give some help in carrying on its operations.

About three years ago, some of the members of the "Edinburgh Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor" thought that something should be done in the way of giving employment to the very poor women who applied for relief, not only as a test of their being really necessitous, but to encourage those who had fallen out of industrious habits, to make a new effort after self-support.

For the carrying out of this idea, some ladies who are interested in the association work, formed themselves into a committee, and a plan was suggested which had been successfully tried by Miss Octavia Hill in London.

The women who most require assistance are just those who are the most helpless, and who in many cases could not be trusted to undertake any work at their own homes, and who would require constant encouragement and supervision. It was therefore necessary to open a workroom under efficient direction, where the women could come to work.

A room was hired in a central position on the south side of the town, and the services were secured of a person, well fitted for the situation of working superintendent and sewing-mistress. The plan adopted for the admission of the women is this: The "Association," instead of giving an order for food on one of the provision merchants who supply these orders, gives an admission to the workroom, authorizing the applicant to receive work to a certain amount, or for a certain time. No payments are made in money, and this is a great test of the necessitousness of each case; but at the end of a week, the woman receives her order for food to the amount for which she has worked.

The workers are paid by time, at the rate of three-halfpence per hour, and as the workroom is only open during four hours five days in the week, the most any one can earn is two shillings and sixpence per week.

Certainly not enough to attract any one to come who prefers to eat the bread of idleness. Small, however, as this payment seems, it is more in proportion than many of the women could make were they paid by piece, as most of them can do nothing but the roughest kinds of work. A few workers, however, sew remarkably well, and under the guidance and instruction of the superintendent, some beautifully finished work has been done in the workroom.

In addition to the payment of the provision orders niven to the women, there are other expenses in congection with the workroom. These have hitherto been met by a yearly grant of £15 from the "Association." This has paid the rent of the room and the superintendent's wages; the cost of materials etc., is paid by the sale of clothes made, and by payments for work sent to be done in the room.

The numbers of those who have received employment have varied each year. In 1871, 156 women were employed: in 1871-72, upwards of 60; and during the winter of 1872-73, between 60 and 90.

The first year the room was often inconveniently crowded, and forty is about the largest number that can well be accommodated at one time. No woman is employed for more than three months, unless under special circumstances; as the help thus given is not intended to be permanent, but just sufficient to keep them from want and despair, till they find some proper means of subsistence. Those who apply for admission are of all ages, varying from 16 to 60.

As to the results of what has been done;—it is not easy to speak with much confidence as to any decided "Improvement in the Condition" of all of these poor women, but this much may be said, that in many cases valuable temporary help has been given; for a few, permanent steady employment has been found, and there is no doubt that, in all cases, the hours spent in the workroom brought a little brightness into lives otherwise sad and lonely enough.

Every day, one or other of the ladies forming the committee spends an hour or two in the workroom to read or talk to the women, and to assist the superintendent. In this way they can make acquaintance with the women, and find out if they are fitted for other better employment, or how they can otherwise be helped.

The visits of one young lady were especially looked forward to, because, as well as reading, she often sang to the women, which afforded them much enjoyment, and they did not hesitate to criticise her performances, and to express their opinion freely as to which songs they liked best. One old woman occasionally volunteered to assist her. They liked, too, occasionally to talk about what was read to them. The story of a girl, whose refractory temper caused much unhappiness to herself and her friends, called forth the exclamation,—"Eh, but that's awfu,' but surely she'll come to before it's a' dune!"

The following cases will serve to show something of the sort of help given:—E. M., a poor girl of sixteen, was obliged from ill health to give up her work in a factory; she was suffering from disease of the hip joint. When she recovered sufficiently to be able to walk with the help of crutches, she gladly accepted the offer of admission to the workroom, and although her home influences were not good, she was very patient and industrious, and came up to the workroom day after day, and in spite of often being in much pain, she said she "liked fine" to come, and she did what work she could. After she left the workroom, we heard she was well enough to take permanent work, and that she was employed in a chignon manufactory, where she earns from three to four shillings a week, and has the promise of an increase to her wages. M. C. was living in one of the lodging houses near the Grassmarket when she applied for help through the sewing room. She had been a lady's maid for many years, but through intemperance, had fallen very low, and into great poverty. During the time she was employed at Roxburgh Place, she kept perfectly sober, and was able gradually to get her clothes out of pawn. She at last got a situation as housekeeper in a tradesman's family in Fifeshire. She has now been there for two years, and continues to give satisfaction.

Of course, in some cases, help is given where the results are not so satisfactory. Mrs R. also lived in one of the Edinburgh lodging houses. She was a widow who had evidently been in respectable circumstances. She had a small government pension, which was sufficient to keep her with the help of what she earned as a sempstress, but for some reason she had fallen out of employment and came to us for help. During two winters she came to the workroom, but she was always in trouble, and in deep

waters; why, we could not understand, because she certainly did not drink. At last we found the poor old woman ate opium. It seemed useless to do anything more for her, and she was recommended to give up her small pension and go into the poorhouse. To this she strongly objected at first, as she was too deeply in debt with her lodging-house keeper to leave; but, on the promise of her debts being paid if she gave up all her pawn tickets, which represented all her available property, she consented to go out to Craiglockhart. As was expected, the pawn tickets were mostly overdue, and were taken in every possible name, in nearly all the pawnshops in the neighbourhood of the Grassmarket. All the articles pawned within the time of her coming to the workroom had been given in the name of one of the ladies she saw there. When asked why she had used this name and not her own, she replied,—"It was from delicacy of feelin', mem. I couldn't use my own name for such transactions!" Her affairs being settled, she went out to the workhouse, but at the beginning of last winter she appeared again, saying, "a country residence" did not suit her, and that "for an aged person, the wide staircases were very cold and draughty." However, she was told no further help could be offered her, and she was recommended to return to her "country residence," where she was when we last heard of her, and to which we hope she is now reconciled.

There are many improvements which might be suggested to make this workroom much more useful than it is, especially if the visitors under the Association would take more interest in the women sent to it.

Much might be done by any one who would undertake to visit, in their own houses, those women who are absent even for a day, during the time they are entitled to receive admission, as in many cases orders have been given to women who were unable to avail themselves of them either from illness or from home duties, which prevented their coming out to work.

Help might be given by procuring work to be done in the room, or by gifts of clothing to be re-made, as such things are often taken by women in payment, instead of their provision orders.

Suggestions as to suitable books for reading aloud in the room would also be very valuable.

F. C. S.

Macduff's Cave.

O HAE ye heard o' Earl Macduff,
How he fled frae fierce Macbeth—
The fause, red-handed, traitor king,
That had sworn to be his death?

The lone rock-cave aneath Kincraig
Looks out owre the saut sea-faem,
An' it's there, where the waves and the winds mak' moan,
Macduff has found a hame.

The white waves thunder on the shore,
Ye could hear them ten miles round;
But of him that lies in the lone rock-cave
They tell not by sough nor sound.

The sea-birds scream frae the jagged rock,
Ye can hear them far and wide;
But they tell nae tale o' wha sits there
An' watches the rising tide.

* * * *

Oh! Rire's castle stands on the hill;
It looks owre sea an' land,
An' it hears the sough of the silver wave
That washes the gowden sand.

The ladie sits in the topmost tow'r,
An' she looks out owre the sea,
Wi' mony a pray'r on her white, white lip,
An' the saut tear in her e'e.

The sun comes up, the sun gaes doun,
The waters rise an' fa';
O for a sicht o' the kindly bark
That's to bear her lord awa'!

The ladie looks to east an' west,
An' syne to north an' south;
Heav'n grant Macbeth an' his mailéd men
Be na first at the rock-cave's mouth!

O, what's yon licht 'neath the castle wa',
Like the gleam o' sword an' spear?
An' whose yon voice at the castle gate,
Micht wake the dead to hear?

"Come forth, an' yield thee to thy king,
Thou haughty rebel thane,
Or by my royal crown I swear
'Twill cost thee bitter pain.

"Come, yield thee, yield thee, haughty thane,
Thy castle an' thy lands,
Or by my royal throne I swear
To tear them frae thy hands."

The ladie hears in the topmost tow'r,
An' she hies her doun the stair;
Oh! but her bonny cheek grows wan,
An' oh! but her heart grows sair.

She 's met the king at the castle gate,
An' wi' mony a cunning word,
She 's wiled the bloodhounds for a day
Frae the life-track o' her lord.

Macbeth has turned frae the castle gate,
To bide till anither day,
An' the ladie 's gane to the topmost tow'r
To watch, an' weep, an' pray.

The sun comes up, the sun gaes doun.
The waters rise an' fa';
O for a sicht o' the kindly bark,
That 's to bear her lord awa'!

Syne day by day Macbeth comes back,
Withouten stint or rest;
An' day by day the ladie's wit
Has wiled him frae the quest.

But aye the sairer grows her heart,
An' the wanner grows her cheek,
An' the slower come the cunning words
That her weary lips maun speak.

Till out an' spak' the fierce Macbeth,
"Nae langer will I bide;
Your lord maun meet me face to face
On the morrow, at evening tide.

"Or, by my halidome I vow,
Ye shall rue it lang an' sair;
For I'll rend your castle stane frae stane,
Till I find the rebel's lair."

O, sair the ladie weeps an' prays,
As she sits in the topmost tow'r,
An' heavy, heavy grows her heart,
As it hears the deadly h aur.

But, oh! what's yon 'twixt the sea an' sky,
That glimmers sae snawy white?
Is it but the sea-bird's silv'ry wing,
That shines in the gay sunlight?

Now, God be praised, who hath sent His help
In the hour o' sorest need!
For yon is nought but the fisher bark;
Heav'n grant it double speed!

The sun is sinking in the west,
It is near the evening tide,
An' Macbeth is back at the castle gate,
But the ladie flings it wide.

And mickle marvels the fierce Macbeth
At the words her fair lips speak;
"Come in, my liege, and follow me,
I will show you him ye seek."

She's ta'en him up to the topmost tow'r,
An' there, 'twixt the sea an' sky,
She's shown him the gleam o' a snaw-white sail,
That shoots like an arrow by.

"There, fause Macbeth, is the Thane o' Fife,
To the English host he's gane;
He will come again to his ain countrie,
But he will not come alane.

"For young Malcolm an' an English host
Will march beside him then;
An' they'll pu' thee doun frae thine ill-won throne,
Though thou fence it wi' armed men."

MEIGRAG BHEAG.

Milla Farrar:

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER XIX.—*Continued.*

BARBARA'S CROSSNESS.

WHEN Alaster had left her, Barbara stood for some time half stunned, leaning against the old birch tree. It was all over then—this was to be the end of it all. I think she felt as if her life was over too—as if what days and weeks and years might still remain to her in this world, would be so long of simple passive *existence*, not *life* at all. She caught herself wondering by and bye what she was to do with those days and weeks and years, that seemed as if they never more could have anything in them for her. In her simple, trusting way, Barbara was a Christian—she knew that there is a higher will than ours, to which our wills must learn to bend; but she was young, with a strong, deep, passionate nature, which was stirred to its very depths, and it takes many a lesson, painfully taught over and over again, before the young and strong can learn to let go their vehement, instinctive clinging to personal happiness, before they can come to recognise that it is indeed possible "to do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness."

For a long while Barbara stood there without feeling the cold north wind that was whistling about her, but by and bye she began to perceive, half mechanically, that it was cold, and that she had better go home; and half unconsciously she drew her plaid closer round, and began to move homewards. She had not wept or lamented, as many a girl would have done; she only felt as if her heart had died within her, and lay in her bosom as cold and heavy as a stone;—but now that she began to move homeward, and to feel the chill air of the winter's afternoon, slow tears began to roll quietly one by one down her cheeks. It was not for Alaster she cried, nor for her own young blighted life, nor for anything in particular, but she was cold and desolate, and the tears *would* come. She checked them, however, before she reached the house. When she got indoors, she went straight upstairs, and took off her hat and plaid. She did not lie down on her bed to think of her perplexities to-day as she had done

yesterday. There were no perplexities now to think about—it was all over and settled. Alaster was gone, life was over for her, she must just go on existing as best she might, what did it matter about anything any more? She just took off her hat and plaid, she did not smoothe her hair or look in the glass or change her walking dress—what was the use? everything was alike to her now. Then she went down to the hall, with an instinctive longing for the warmth of the fireside. Nancy was still at her spinning, she was hurrying on with those table cloths to have them all ready for her marriage. She looked up with a bright face as Barbara entered.

"Dear me, Barbara," she said, "Elspet will be in despair what could take you out in such a cold day, after all her doctoring last night? You really do look cold, too" she added anxiously noticing the pallor of her sister's face "indeed you will make yourself ill Barbara, with those solemn rambles of yours, do come and sit by the fire and get yourself warmed."

Barbara sat down when a low stool close to the fire, she was shivering all over and the warmth was grateful to her, though she caught herself wondering why she should care about it. Nancy looked at her anxiously, she saw there was something the matter but her fear was only that Elspet had been right, and that her sister had got a stroke of the wind sitting on old Peggy's grave; nevertheless the thought brought a shade into the bright face bending over her spinning wheel. Barbara sat watching her sister's busy fingers. Nancy's thoughts had flitted off again to the happy past days, when Alaster was with them, and on to the still happier days to which she looked forward, when they should not be separated any more, and unconsciously she kept humming a merry tune. Barbara sat watching her, her nerves were all unstrung with the strain that had been put upon them for the last two days, and the busy fingers and the happy face and the merry tune seemed to torture her very soul. By and bye the torture seemed to reach such a pitch that she could endure it no longer, and suddenly starting up from the stool on which she was sitting, she exclaimed angrily, "I do wish, Nancy, you would stop that eternal spinning and singing, it's enough to send a person crazy to see you sitting there," and she hastened hastily out of the room. Nancy looked up in astonishment. That Barbara, who was usually so equable, so patient with every one, and who never [illegible]

long as she remembered, had said one unkind or hasty word to her motherless little sister, should speak so, and apparently without the slightest cause, was more than Nancy could understand. She tried to reason to herself about it, but she could only come to the conclusion that Barbara was very ill, or else she could never have spoken so to her; and appalled at the possibility, Nancy sat down and began to cry.

CHAPTER XX

"LAYING THE WOOD IN ORDER"

NANCY was so little used to ebullitions of temper on Barbara's part, and so much accustomed to get help from her in all her difficulties, without the idea ever entering her head that Barbara might have difficulties of her own, in which she, Nancy, might help and comfort *her*, that when Barbara spoke so crossly that winter's afternoon, she felt simply stunned and helpless, and sat down on the hearth-rug and cried. It never occurred to her as a possibility that this strong, brave, elder sister of hers, who was always so ready to bear her burdens for her, might, perhaps, have burdens of her own, which she in her turn might lighten by loving sympathy. Somehow Barbara had always seemed to Nancy so far above her, something like a bright, strong, pitying angel, who always came to comfort her in her poor, childish, human needs, but to whom it would have been presumption to offer sympathy or help, or even to imagine that such sympathy and help might be needed. And yet how that brave, strong heart had often longed for human sympathy in the days that were past! how it was breaking for it at that very moment! I do not suppose that Nancy's sympathy could have been to Barbara what Barbara's was to her; it could not have rested and satisfied her as her's did Nancy, it was not *understanding* enough; but still it would have been much to her, not to have told Nancy what grieved her, that she could not have done, but just to have laid her head on any loving human heart and wept her fill. But Nancy did not know; nobody understood, and so Barbara had to turn from human sympathy to poor old Oscar's, whom she found watching for her at her bedroom door, and whom she took into her room with her, still locking the door, sat down on the floor, and put her arms round his shaggy neck, and cried as if her heart would

break. Poor old Oscar, he did not understand of course (though perhaps he understood more than many a human comforter might have done), he only knew that Barbara was sorry, and that he was sorry she was sorry; and so he looked in her face with his great, loving, pitying eyes, and laid his paw upon her knees, and licked her cold hands; and somehow the mute sympathy soothed her. There was something, too, in Oscar's perfect incapability to talk about what he saw, or to betray her hours of weakness to others, that soothed Barbara's proud nature with a sense of security and *abandon* in his presence; she might be as foolish as she liked, he would not blame or laugh at her, he would be sorry, and he couldn't tell. So, on the whole, Oscar was not so very bad a confidante.

Old Elspet put her head in at the hall door while Nancy was sitting crying on the rug. It was supper time, and she was coming to lay the table. A look of great amazement and consternation came over her kindly old face as she caught sight of Nancy's bleared face and swollen eyes.

"Guid guide us, Miss Nancy, what's gaen wrang wi' my bonny bairn!" she exclaimed, coming close up to her, and laying her big work-hardened hand on Nancy's chesnut hair. "Your een are ower young to be greetin' that gate, my hinny, what's wrang? tell auld Elspet, my bonny lassie," she said, gathering the sobbing girl into her kindly old bosom.

"Oh Elspet, dear," sobbed Nancy, "I don't know what's the matter with Barbara, I'm afraid she must be very ill, she came in so cold and white, and she spoke to me so crossly, and I hadn't done anything;" and poor Nancy stopped, her voice choked with sobs.

"Guid preserve us!" exclaimed Elspet, holding up both her hands in amazement; "heard a body e'er the like o' that? Wha could be cross wi' my bonny lamb? Whist ye, my hinny, naebody shall be cross wi' ye gin auld Elspet can help it!"

"It's not that, Elspet," sobbed Nancy, "but I'm afraid Barbara must be ill. She never said a cross word to me that I can remember before, and, indeed, I hadn't done anything," and the poor child hid her face again on Elspet's shoulder.

"Whisht ye, my bairn, whisht ye," said Elspet soothingly, but her kind old face had grown very grave, and

she said no further word of blame of Barbara, for something seemed whispering in her ear, "The shadow, the shadow!"

In the meantime, Barbara had sobbed her griefs out on old Oscar's neck, and a sort of quiet, blank, dreary despondency had succeeded to the petulance of her sorrow. She was thoroughly ashamed of her crossness to her little sister, and in her generous, impulsive way, she had made up her mind to apologise for it at once; but no feeling of warmth, or comfort, or human affection followed this resolution. She had been unjust to Nancy, and she would tell her so, she thought; but it was only justice, not love, that prompted her. She felt as if she cared for nothing and nobody, as if she were cold to the heart, and would never be warm again, as if, since she must not love Alaster, she could never care for Nancy or anybody else any more. As she rose from the floor, she felt as if she was quite a different person from the warm, impulsive Barbara, full of high hopes, and noble aims, and pitying tenderness, that she had known of old. She felt cold, and hard, and dreary, and old; and she wondered to herself whether her hair had grown suddenly grey, as she had heard of people's doing. She felt as if, whether it had done so or not, it should have done so; such a change would only have been, she thought, the fitting outward sign of the inward fact; and she looked in the glass with almost a sort of expectation of finding that it was so. But the bright golden brown was as lustrous as ever, and she turned away with a half-impatient sigh. She bathed her face to take away the trace of tears, and then she went drearily down stairs. She was paler than usual, that was all that Nancy noticed, as she looked up wistfully as Barbara entered the hall. She went straight up to Nancy, and kissed her very gravely, saying,—

"I am sorry I spoke so crossly to you, Nancy, will you forgive me?" She spoke quietly and drearily, without any warmth or impulse in her voice. Nancy turned and threw both her arms round her sister's neck.

"Oh, Barbara, dear," she said, tears coming again into her bright eyes, "never mind that; I was only so afraid that you were ill, and you *do* look ill. Oh, Barbara, what is the matter?"

"Nothing is the matter; I am not ill, do not trouble yourself about me, Nancy," said her sister, and in spite of all her efforts, she could not keep a touch of petvishness

out of her voice. She did not return Nancy's embrace either, though she did not repulse it; she received it passively, as if she put up with it, that was all. Nancy felt the coldness of her manner, and felt vexed and puzzled as she turned away, tears standing in her bright eyes.

Next day it was much the same, and the next and the next. Everybody said how changed Miss Barbara was, and everybody about Milla Forres felt vexed and puzzled about it. She had grown listless, and cold, and indifferent; she was often peevish, and sometimes petulant. All sorts of reasons were assigned, but no one guessed the right one. They thought she was ill, and would have tended her with all loving offices, but she put them from her impatiently; she was quite well, she said, and needed no doctoring—so by degrees they came to leave her alone. Old Elspet shook her head, and muttered under her breath about "the shadow," but even she never dreamt of the real cause of the sad change in her young mistress. Poor Barbara, how miserable she was in those days! No one felt the change in her so acutely as she felt it in herself. She hated and despised herself for it, and often, when she had been petulant and peevish during the day, and vexed the kind hearts around her, she spent the whole night in grieving over it, and making good resolutions for the future, and many and many a morning her pillow was quite wet with tears. But all her tears and resolutions over-night seemed to have no effect in keeping her from doing exactly the same next day, and then followed another night of tears and repentance. She felt as if her whole heart had been scarified, and the lightest touch on the raw flesh made her wince to the core.

Poor child, she could do the grand part of the sacrifice, and give up her life's happiness at the call of duty and sisterly affection, but the details were too much for her;—she could offer her Isaac, but the "laying of the wood in order" was beyond her powers.

Week after week passed in this way. A short note had come to Nancy from Alaster, merely announcing the fact that he was on his way to join the Prince's army, and that, as letters might be delayed and lost, she must not be anxious should they fail to reach her. The note was very brief, but both its brevity and its formality seemed excused by the haste with which it had been written on a hurried journey southwards, and the danger

in those troubled times of its falling into wrong hands. Alaster did not even sign his name, that would have been too dangerous, so Nancy was not much disappointed at the absence of lover-like phrases, or the formal tone of the epistle. She carried it about with her in her bosom, and cried over it, and the dangers to which its writer was exposed, many a time—poor, trusting little soul,—without one doubt of the continued love of the man who had asked her to be his wife.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CALL TO BATTLE

THE spring flowers were coming out in the little patch of garden ground which the girls cultivated at Milla Forres. It was Nancy who had done all the gardening work this winter, for Barbara seemed to have lost all interest in it, and not in it only, but in all the other innocent, happy employments that the sisters had all their lives followed together. Nancy had put in the young plants, and cleared away the fallen dead leaves, but she had done it wistfully and sadly; she was not used to working alone, and it seemed dreary and desolate to her. Now and then, indeed, Barbara would seem to be seized with a sudden fit of energy, and she would rise at her old early hours (she had grown very late in the mornings in these dreary days, that always seemed as if they were too long), and set to work at her old occupations with a sort of feverish eagerness; and then Elspet and Nancy would rejoice and think that she was getting well again and like her old self, and that everything would soon be again as it had been in the happy old days, when Barbara was the old, kind, cheery Barbara. But alas! the sudden energy soon faded; sometimes it lasted for a day or two, sometimes it scarcely outlived a forenoon, and the listless indifference and despondency gathered round her as before. Elspet was beginning to be seriously alarmed about her health, she could not understand the change, excepting on the supposition that there was some secret, insidious disease at work, which baffled even the virtues of her favourite panacea of marjoram tea; and yet Barbara did not seem to be ill. She never complained, indeed she put away all idea of illness with

petulant impatience, if at any time it was suggested to her, and when she could be induced to exert herself, she seemed quite capable of taking as long a walk, or doing as much work as ever—more, in fact, for in her brief spasmodic periods of energy, Elspet marvelled at the amount of work she accomplished, and the immense exertion of which she seemed capable. So things went on till the spring flowers were out in the garden, and the young leaves were beginning to bud on the birch trees.

One Sunday morning in the early spring, the idea seized Barbara that she would go and hear old Mr Mackay. She had not seen the old man or heard him preach since she had parted with him at Peggy's grave. Somehow she had felt too listless and indifferent about everything to care to go in any way out of the beaten track, it was too much trouble, so she had gone submissively with her sister and Elspet, Sunday after Sunday, to Carrick chapel, and sat patiently through the curate's maundering discourses, with her great deep eyes fixed upon the speaker, but without one idea of his discourse entering into her mind. She had rather avoided old Mr Mackay, the associations of their last meeting were still too freshly painful, and she shrank from anything that would arouse them. However, this bright spring Sunday morning a great longing seemed to have come over her to see the old man's kindly face, and perhaps get a word of fatherly comfort from him which might soothe the pain at her heart. Nancy and Elspet exchanged looks of pleasure when she announced to them abruptly that she was going to hear Mr Mackay. In the old happy days, both of them, Elspet especially, had objected to Barbara's patronage of the little Presbyterian kirk, but now her wish to return there seemed like a coming back to her old self, and they both hailed it as a good omen.

The service was begun when Barbara entered, and she crept noiselessly into the seat nearest the door. The opening psalm was over, and the little congregation were standing at prayer. The first words she heard in Mr Mackay's quiet, earnest tones were, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name them which Thou hast given me, for they are Thine." The words sent her thoughts back to old Peggy, and her confident assurance that she, Barbara, was "yin o' His," and that "He would tak' care o' His ain," and a sudden pang came to her heart as she thought how little through these past miserable months she had been

acting like "yin o' His" Barbara had not thought much of Peggy, or of Peggy's commission to find her wandering, lost girl, during these months; the one absorbing thought and pain seemed to have driven all other thoughts away, not from her mind only, but even from her memory. It was not only that she did not think about them, but that they seemed to have been blotted out altogether from her mind, she could not remember, even when she tried to recall them. The prayer was ended before she had recovered from the reverie into which its first words had thrown her, and she sat down with the rest of the worshippers. Mr Mackay opened the big Bible and began to read the seventeenth chapter of St. John, that wonderful prayer in which our Saviour committed the disciples He was leaving behind Him to His Father's care. Mr Mackay chose the last verse of the preceding chapter, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," as his text, and in simple earnest words that kindled as they went on into a glow of quiet enthusiasm, he told his simple hearers how Christ's parting words had been fulfilled in all ages, in the experience of every true disciple; how it was a prophecy of the history both of the Christian church and of every individual Christian man and woman, a summary of the whole Christian life. "Distressed, yet not in despair, persecuted, yet not forsaken, cast down, yet not destroyed." A conflict always, but a conflict in which the victory was secure. The old man glowed into eloquence as he told of the days he remembered as a boy, when the Church of Scotland had been visibly fighting in this conflict, and when the words of his text had sounded like an invigorating march of battle, an assurance of triumph in the thickest of the fight. And then he turned from the church's warfare to the fight of faith in every Christian's heart, how it is always going on, and how we are often tempted to lay down our weapons and to say, "I can fight no longer, for the flesh and the [illegible] and [illegible] through the [illegible] of our hearts, these triumphant words of Christ's [illegible] "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." [illegible] our Saviour [illegible] His soldiers [illegible] it and [illegible] [illegible]

recruits. He tells you the truth at once, 'In the world ye shall have tribulation.' You must make up your minds to that, but you are not to be afraid or discouraged; you are to 'be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.' Was there ever such a fight as this, my friends? A battle with the victory secured. And then *what* a victory, 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son,'—is not the chance even of such a victory worth any battle? And it is no mere *chance* that you are offered; your great Captain has won it for you already. Fight on, then, fellow-soldiers! there may be tough work before you, but the battle is short at the longest, and the victory is sure, and all through the fight, if you will but listen, you may hear your Captain's voice sounding above the din of the fray, 'Be of good cheer, *I* have overcome the world.'"

Barbara listened to the inspiriting words, and for the time the weight seemed to be lifted from her heart, and a new and stronger purpose rose like day-dawn over the night of her misery. It was only the first glimmer of dawn yet, only a flickering hope that after all even for her, life might yet be worth having—not for happiness, but for work—that her empty life might yet be filled by a noble purpose—it might still be worth her while to live for the sake of Him who died. It was not clear to her how she could do this, much was dark to her still; but "the day-star had arisen in her heart," and by and bye its dim twilight would broaden into "perfect day." She did not hear much of Mr Mackay's concluding prayer, she was too busy with the new thoughts that were surging up in her mind. but before it was ended she had put up a little silent trembling prayer of her own, that strength might be given *her* also to "overcome."

The prayer over, Mr Mackay gave out the beautiful words of the psalm that she remembered singing to old Peggy,

> "I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
> From whence doth come mine aid,"

and Barbara, as she joined her voice to the homely music, felt the triumphant words thrill through her soul. Then came the solemn, simple, parting benediction, and she bent her head low as the venerable old man raised his trembling hands and repeated the words—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,

and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all, now, henceforth, and for ever."

Barbara did not stay to speak to the old man as her custom was after service, her heart was too full; so she slipped quietly out among the little crowd of shepherds, and old wives with white mutches, and little rosy-cheeked children, and bonny country lassies, many of whom curtseyed low to the "young leddy o' Milla Forres" as she passed, and went swiftly on alone down the glen. She walked on with the old rapid step, which had grown strange to her of late—a step with hope and purpose in it—and as she walked, she took a rapid review of the last few months. She was filled with shame as she did so, to think how she had allowed this personal sorrow of hers to interfere with all her duties, and with the happiness of those around her, and she called herself a selfish coward that it had been so. She tried to resolve that for the future it should be different, but she remembered her many nights of tears and good resolutions, and how soon they had vanished; and so her resolutions now were taken very humbly and self-distrustingly—I think it was rather a prayer that it *might* be so, than a resolution that it should. The last psalm they had sung had set her thinking about old Peggy's death-bed, and the thought flashed across her for the first time all these months, of the commission she had undertaken to find her daughter, and she felt a keen sting of self-reproach that she had so long neglected to redeem her promise. In her present state of mind, too, it was a relief to have some positive, definite work to set before herself. It would be easier, she thought, to fight with her own heart when her mind and energies were actively engaged in some definite pursuit, than to carry on the warfare with nothing more to distract her from her pain than the ordinary routine of quiet daily life. So before she reached the gate of Milla Forres, she had made up her mind at once to set about making such inquiries as might lead to the discovery of old Peggy's wandering daughter.

JEANIE MORISON.

"My soul desired the first-ripe fruit."

I.

INTO the world he came—a sweet white life,
With feeble breath and tiny helpless hands,
That in far days should have to bear the strife
Of anxious earnestness in distant lands.

Into the world he came, and by and bye,
With all the precious wonder of his birth,
While, though sweet summer lingered in the sky,
Autumnal breezes fanned the languid earth,

His mother took him, clad in simple white,
And offered him to Christ that He would bless,
And keep him through the darkness and the light,
Within the shelter of His Righteousness.

And holy water sprinkled on his brow
Made trebly certain for the little one
That Father, Son and Holy Ghost would now
And evermore protect the life begun.

They gave him to his mother back again,
Who watched (herself all but a child in years)
Upon her baby's brow the cross of pain
Dry slowly, leaving only trace of tears.

"'Tis well," she whispered humbly, "I am glad,
Ah, thankful, too, that in that other land
Angels will know my child and wish they had
His voice to mingle in their choir-band."

II.

Years wandered onwards and the cross was there,
Sin-stained and shadowed, but existing still
Upon the self-same forehead, where the hair
Grew darker than at first had been its will.

Through fire and passion it had led the way,
Guiding the stormy heart to rest in peace,
Out far beyond where in this tempest day
All fears are calmed and weariness may cease.

But on the young boy's soul a weight of sin
Fought with the better spirit, that as yet
Knew well the right and wrong that was within,
And panted for the freedom to forget.

Then, though he wished it not, there came a day
When even boyhood waned before the years
Of perfect manhood, that in time should lay
Exhausted with the burden of its tears.

A day when murmuring with tender strain
The organ notes fell softly on his ear,
As he walked up the old church aisle again
With doubting heart between its love and fear,

To kneel before that dear and holy Lord,
Who years ago unwearied trod our land,
And there himself to buckle on the sword,
And fight the battle with his own right hand

III.

Years wandered onwards. Underneath a sky
Whose burning breezes make the twilight seem
Like that soft night hour, when asleep we lie
And lose our sad existence in a dream,

A man, with anxious face that told of care,
Lived toiling for the good in heathen lands,
Content to strive if only he might bear
One soul to heaven in his dying hands.

A man, whose earnestness seemed thrown away
Among the men where he had willed to dwell,
Yet who would teach *him* in a far-off day
The power of the truth he had to tell.

He loved with all the passion of a soul
That has no greater masterpiece to give,
But which would rather die before the goal,
Than own it, though the owning was to live.

Ah me! *this* is the saddest pain of all,
It creeps into the fibres of the heart,
It mingles with the very rains that fall,
And with each daily trifle has a part.

The cross had grown up to its fullest trial,
In its deep shadow he was called to sit,
The cup was holden to his lips meanwhile,
And to the very dregs he drank of it.

IV.

Years wandered onwards. He whose life had been
One struggle for the rest that had not come,
Who long had prayed, but yet had never seen
One glimpse within the chambers of his Home,

Began to learn a lesson which did show
That perfect peace must come from God alone,
Without the forms by which we here below
Believe we gain our pardon from His Throne.

Not in the virtue of Baptismal Dew,
Or in the loyalty of any Rite
Does perfect pardon make our errors few,
Or wash us pure in His most holy sight.

It comes by little acts of daily life:
By simple trust: by kind and humble heart:
By gentle calmness in the midst of strife:
By being *in* the world and yet apart.

By thought and care for other creatures' good:
By showing Christ in every little deed:
His Presence as our necessary food:
His love the highest favour that we need.

And so, while busy life still hurried on,
And when the burden of the hill was past,
When many weary days had come and gone,
The poor sheep knew his Shepherd-King at last.

NAOMI S. SMITH.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

PART III.—(*Concluded*).

LEON DE FRAJOU, commandant of the fort of Sidi-Rhean, captain in the Light Horse, and Vicomte de Frajou Rocheambeau in Languedoc, had he chosen, which he rarely did, to assume the title, was at this time a handsome, dark, refined looking man, rather past thirty. Every one liked him, for he radiated kindliness on all sides, and if a touch of personal and national vanity proved him to be mortal and a Frenchman, still a more brilliant officer, and a cheerier companion it would be hard to find. Raoul looked at him with an air of such complete satisfaction that he began to laugh, as he said, "Welcome, Monsieur le docteur to Sidi-Rhean. You rode so well yesterday, and slept so well to-day, that you evidently always do the right thing; we only hope you will stay with us some time."

"For a little while you must be troubled with me," said Raoul, "the ball which spent itself against my rib yesterday has, I think, fractured it; but it is an excellent case—the bone is not displaced; I only need quiet for a week or two; but how do you know I am a doctor? and what is Sidi-Rhean, or as I would translate it, the Lordship of Myrtles?"

"Sidi-Rhean may be called an island, entirely surrounded by revolted Arabs; lately it was a peninsula connected with Algiers. As to you, we have read the livraison on your person, describing you as a Hanoverian doctor, Raoul Watcher—besides we have heard of the Bey of Tittery's wonderful physician—not a renegade?" he added, with a sharp glance at Raoul.

"Certainly not—and no Hanoverian, but a Frenchman," answered Raoul, giving a brief account of his adventures.

"I am glad indeed you are a countryman," said De Frajou, "and it is all right; but if you take my advice, till you have fully reported your case at head-quarters, do not bring your nationality much *en evidence*. Your hospital at Medeah has been a good deal talked of, and what does not matter for a German, needs full explanation in a Frenchman. Meanwhile, shall we have breakfast here together?" He clapped his hands and summoned

a negro, who brought coffee, breakfast, and chibouques —and then continued, "I have only just got home, and dressed, you see: we had a sharp brush in the night. Pensez donc, I took the Blockhouse after all, and partly destroyed it; we did not want to keep it now Blidah is gone. Yesterday when you gave us such good help, I was only going to bring the garrison off. I have only got two of the poor fellows alive. These Arabs ought to have cut us to pieces yesterday, they have no tactics, civilisation has done nothing for them but giving them bad muskets, otherwise they are just the troops that fought under Saladin. But if ever they get a good leader—well, *qui vivra verra*." The two chatted over their coffee and pipes, till they felt like old friends. There was a letter addressed to Mademoiselle Talbot that Raoul had long carried about with him, waiting for an opportunity. He now requested that this, when he had added to it, might be sent off with the dispatches; and then, feeling that he could do his new friend no higher honour, began for the first time for so many months to talk of Gabrielle. It must be owned he made up for his silence, but he had found a most sympathetic listener, for when at last he began to apologise for so long a story, De Frajou assured him they had a strange leisure in their lonely life, "we have war, illness, and besides, nothing at all; long tales of love and adventure just suit us—here one quite understands the spirit of the *mille et une nuits*. You shall talk of your *Promise* for many an evening—conceive what that little letter will be to her! Who's there? O! Lieutenant Legros,"—as a square, stiff youth looked round the curtain.

"He seemed hardly civil to me yesterday," said Raoul, "I don't know why."

"I do," answered the other,—"Ah! Legros, come in. I was just telling monsieur le docteur, what a rigorous orthodox catholic you were, a sort of inquisitor: how alarmed that there was a flavour of Mahomet about him; nothing of the sort, mon cher—as Christian as yourself."

"You know I don't like superstitions, not even yours, mon capitaine," answered Legros, "and when I heard that Monsieur had an hospital là-bas, and was in high favour, what was one to believe?"

De Frajou laughed. "*He* believes nothing at all, doctor; he did not believe the Arabs had taken the block-house when you told us."

"And why did you believe me?" said Raoul.

"Oh! he will tell you I am so credulous; I looked at your face; yes, lieutenant, I follow you,"—as Legros withdrew—"he believes in just and merely what his horse does—fodder; *du reste* like it, a good animal, honest, courageous, patient. So you lie still for a day or two; when you are about again you must put our hospital to rights, unfortunately we need it."

Raoul was soon able to make himself useful in the little garrison, where fever was on the increase. He and the captain became fast friends, and beguiled many an hour in talk on the terrace. It was difficult to find cheerful occupation for the men. De Frajou often made daring expeditions in the neighbourhood to employ them and obtain fresh food and cattle. After one of these he was criticised by the other officers for personal rashness, and Raoul, as they smoked together on the terrace in the sweet May night, asked him if this were so.

"I hope not," said he, "but if it were, what have I to care for? Ma foi, I remember when life was pleasant enough to make it somewhat creditable to risk it. But now, *qu voulez vous!* Since mob-law has again dictated to France, I have too little hope to serve her as a citizen; I can only be a soldier. Then, again, I represent an old noble family whose name is left to lands, of which not an acre belongs to them, and a castle the peasants avoid after nightfall, and I am of their opinion; supposing they do return, there are few of my recent ancestors I should care to meet. Then all my life I loved Clémence, my cousin; for years we were engaged, yet her parents, after much resistance, forced her into a rich marriage. Two years ago I saw her on her death-bed, for she died of it. Poor dear, she thanked me for never coming near her since her marriage. She had a hard fight. She died as a saint, and I keep her little crucifix still. Never tell me love like hers for me is not immortal. I have no family but the regiment, to see that the men are cared for, and the barracks neat, and a few days of glorious battle excitement; voilà tout!"

Raoul leaned silently over the parapet, and looked into the vast still blue of the night. The fragrance of myrtles and orange-trees rose to where he stood. The country seemed some happy valley guarded by those looming purple mountains, rather than a desert wasted by pestilence and war. Did the life of De Frajou resemble it, outwardly

so fair, and really so desolate? In the distance sounded a rough soldier chorus,—

> Le vin, le jeu, l'amour et le tabac,
> Voilà, voilà, le refrain des bivouacs.

How arid and devoid of true joy was the drifting military life. Oh, well for him that Gabrielle was *fermière*, with no parents to force her into some hated alliance. Michel was a safe rival; soon they would meet, and all would be well. But why did she not write? He did not know that the courier who carried the letter had been killed on the way. The Arabs seldom made prisoners, thus giving the war a character of exasperation too common when one of the belligerents is only half-civilised.

Raoul had meant to return with the relief party soon expected from Algiers; but meanwhile sickness increased on his hands. Under the vine-wreathed Moorish arches the fever-stricken men lay panting their lives out, obscure sacrifices for their country. Raoul toiled night and day, lamenting for drugs he could not get, and driving the poor little routine-led assistant surgeon half wild by his original devices and bold experiments. He certainly was rewarded by a larger percentage of cures than most could show, but then the sick were so numerous; and even De Frajou's heart sank when, one hot June day, it became evident that Raoul had the fever. Meanwhile the convoy arrived from Algiers, and with it a wandering English baronet, an old acquaintance of De Frajou's. Sir James Eltham had left his yacht in Algiers harbour; before he owned her he had suffered much from having nothing to do; now his chief occupation was to find something for the yacht to do. The captain received him cordially, but marvelled in his heart over the English eccentricity which had led him to ride two days across a hostile country, to visit an acquaintance in a fever-stricken garrison. However, Sir James seemed quite satisfied with his expedition, and interested in everything, especially in poor Raoul, who lay with wide eyes, sometimes talking in his delirium of Gabrielle and the Siren, then again imploring to be taken to the sea. "As they stood looking at him," De Frajou explained that before his illness he had advised that the convalescents should be sent thither as the best cure, and several were to go with the convoy; but it was too soon to move the poor doctor. He endeavoured to satisfy him by assuring him he should go to the sea; and, as if the assurance had

reached his mind, he turned round and fell into a sound, refreshing sleep. Sir James determined to try and get him on board his yacht, and said he would bring her round to the nearest point on the coast to the Bordj. "It will go hard but we will get across that twenty miles with an armed escort, then we can fetch him back with us; you see I have nothing else very pressing to do just now,"—said this useful tourist, and so took leave, promising to return in ten days. Raoul woke from that sleep weak but conscious, and continued to improve. One morning, a week later, as De Frajou entered, he said, "You have had a good night, I see." "Yes," said Raoul, "a better night, but a strange dream. You will laugh at the impression it has left. I was feeling very uneasy, when a cool hand seemed to clasp mine. I said, 'take me to the sea,'—and fancied I woke, but the dream must have grown deeper, for I saw a fair woman with large strange eyes looking at me. She seemed fresh risen from the sea, and I knew she had come from the Fontaine, and that she was the Siren."

"She *has* come," said De Frajou, "and perhaps she is the Siren."

British eccentricity had seemed to him to have reached its climax, when the previous evening he had seen, with Sir James, who had returned to the Bordj with an armed escort, an Amazon, as he expressed it, *i.e.* a lady on horseback. Sir James explained that this was Mrs Eltham, his brother's widow, whom he was bringing home to her father from the East. She said the expedition would be good for her spirits, and "with her it is a case of *volontè de femme, volontè de Dieu*, I assure you," said the brother-in-law, shrugging his shoulders. She was, though nearly forty, still a handsome woman, with almost flaxen hair, and large greenish brown eyes; a weak character herself, she could bend strong ones to her will; she was not exactly false, because she could persuade herself whatever she said was true, nor precisely unprincipled, for she believed whatever she wished to do was her duty; she followed her strong instincts wherever they led, with a pertinacity, aided by a certain feminine softness and tact, that gave her for a time great power over men. The daughter of a clever surgeon in a cavalry regiment, she had eloped with Captain Eltham, one of the officers. The love that years of poverty had somewhat cooled had revived during his last illness,

when she had shown herself a kind nurse. Now, after his death, his eldest brother was fetching her home, when this new excitement offered itself. She was much fêted for two days at the Bordj, and then with a good escort they made their way safely to the yacht, taking Raoul and another invalid in ambulance *cacolets*. Raul and De Frajou took an affectionate leave, and the yacht sailed. The weather was splendid, there was every comfort on board, and Raoul lay under an awning on deck, drinking in health and strength from the fresh breezes. Mrs Eltham, or Millicent, as she taught him to call her, was in her element. She waited on him assiduously, talked to him by the hour; she was the first woman he had spoken to for years, and soon won his confidence. The mention of Gabrielle was a blow to her, but she perceived it was evidently her duty to break off so ill-assorted a match between a farmer's daughter and the clever cultivated doctor, who was rapidly becoming the hero of her thoughts. Shake his fidelity she could not, but she succeeded in making him very anxious as to the effect of that last dispute, coupled with his absence. She also persuaded Raoul to land first in England, the rather that in his weak state he was still unfit to travel alone; and when they despatched their post at Bordeaux, and another letter was written to Gabrielle, she quietly dropped it overboard. "The longer she waits the better," thought she.

The voyage was over, and Raoul was hospitably received by old Doctor Holt, her father, who now lived in a pretty villa near a sea-port town, where he had some superintendence over the hospital. Thither the old man took Raoul, and was delighted with his fresh science and bright intelligence. Indeed he conceived the idea of getting for him an excellent medical appointment at Montreal, which had been offered to himself, but which he feared to undertake, and where native French would be invaluable. A pity he was ten years younger than "Milly," who had evidently set her heart on him, or what an excellent husband for her he would be, thought the old man. Meanwhile, Raoul, disappointed at finding no letter from Gabrielle, and fearing he knew not what, wrote to Monsieur Paul the letter which fell into the hands of the Mayor of Valmont. In a few days a letter came from France, which he took to his room to read. It was from Michel Talbot, dated from Rouen, and first

informing him that, owing to the death of Monsieur Paul, he, the mayor, had opened the letter, it went on—"Gabrielle is now my wife, but only because she believes you to be dead, for she still loves you; as you value her peace and future happiness, I implore you let no one here know you are alive for a year or two, when her mind will be settled." He promised to send Raoul his papers, and property, and enclosed part of a letter from Gabrielle to himself, which ran thus:—"Never blame Raoul to me, I still love him and you must be content to know it. I feel sure death only would have kept him from me, and I hope death will reunite us, but I will try to be a pleasant, useful wife to you."

Here the fragment broke off, but it was enough. Raoul knew Michel to be his rival, and never doubted his letter. It has happened to men in the full security of home, that a sudden earthquake has split the roof and hurled down the walls, and they have found themselves bewildered under the sky, with dust and ruins only left of the familiar rooms. So it was with Raoul; everything seemed to have fallen to dust round him, and he was left "alone in a land of sand and thorns;" his heart seemed physically to die away within him, and instinctively he lay down on the bed, and pondered till the full meaning of what he had read came to him. He was a man, patient and placid to a certain point, but capable of strong passions when roused. First came fierce indignation against Gabrielle. Why could she not have been true when he was so faithful? Then her own mournful words caused his anger to melt into an agony of grief and compassion. It was partly his own fault; had he but gone at once to Algiers and home when he was free! Why had it all happened? and that fierce questioning of Providence, which is apt to come at times of great calamity, racked him with a kind of wild despair, till it had spent itself and and a new passion took its place. It was as if a wave rose, first of bitter thought, increasing to a pain too strong for thought, and subsiding, from very exhaustion of suffering, only to surge up again, the same yet different—like a stormy tide rolling in on a dreary shore. At last he sprang to his feet, feeling he must stun the agony by physical exertion. He hurried down to the shore, and began pacing to and fro in a manner which was violent exercise for a convalescent. Evening drew on, Millicent came to the sands and entreated him to come in, but he

shook her roughly off. Later he wandered to a little chapel of his own faith attached to a convent. There were only three or four people in the little dark nave, and the nuns were singing Compline in the choir. He took a chair in the corner, and listened to their sweet voices. "Cum invocarem," they sang, and "In te Domine speravi," and the peaceful versicles that at the end of the service seem to soothe the cares and troubles of the day to rest.

> "Be the day weary, or be the day long,
> At last it ringeth to even-song,"

and life was but a longer day. Raoul had found the calm he needed, not only from the direct influence of the service, but because he began to recollect how his profession was left to him, in which he was becoming aware of exceptional abilities. He would try for the Montreal appointment; and see Gabrielle once more. Better face this dreadful misfortune with no concealments. When he got home, he briefly informed Millicent of the facts; she seemed in no wise astonished, but, trying to hide her own great satisfaction, she combated strongly his idea of going to Valmont. It was mere cruelty to the girl; she could go there herself and bring Raoul all the news, if as he said, he wished to hear about her from some one besides Michel. For the next few days his going proved to be impossible, for he had a feverish relapse confining him to his own room. Meanwhile Michel wrote again, thanking him for his silence, enclosing drafts for £200 which belonged to Raoul; also his other papers of which he had been making copies, and these copies he afterwards showed to the Talbots as proofs of his death. Raoul had grown strangely acquiescent and indifferent, so Millicent had her way; she was well used to travel, and one afternoon rattled up in a little carriage to the mayor's door at Valmont.

Valmont, nestled in its grassy basin, with its two white headlands running far out to sea, seemed to her very rustic and remote, a mere cluster of cottages and gardens. Even the mayor's smart house, with more window than wall, was smothered up in mignionette and mallow, and roses growing rankly. "Can I see Madame Talbot," she inquired of the bonne who came to the door, for she had a story ready for Gabrielle. "Pardon, not for a few days yet, she is still Mademoiselle Gabrielle, but Monsieur Talbot is within;" and the consternated Millicent was shown into the presence of the yet more consternated

Michel, when she introduced herself as the friend of Doctor Wachter. When he had written to Raoul, he thought his speedy marriage was certain. Since then he had received from Gabrielle the letter which announced her change of purpose; but he could not now go back. The strange lady's visible discomposure gave him confidence, he saw her wishes were his, and he blandly explained that though the civil marriage had taken place, the non-essential church ceremony, which was all important to the peasants, would not be till the week following. He had to settle the day that very evening, at the farm; if Madame would so far honour him as to accompany him and explore the celebrated Fontaine des Sirènes while he called there, he would himself drive her on to Grandport, where was a good hotel, and whence the English boat sailed next day. In such a crisis of his life he did not dare to show hospitality to so beautiful a lady, whose connection he could not explain, for fear of the *qu'en dira t'on;* Valmont gossip was incredible. So Millicent was escorted to the Mermaid's Fountain by Michel, and there waited his return from the stormy interview already mentioned. Michel had spread a dainty little repast for her in a great dry cave in the cliff not far off; still his absence seemed long as she sat on the rocks outside, no feeling of the beauty a round winning her thoughts from their habitual subject, herself. Some mystery she shrank from investigating, there evidently was, though she did not acknowledge to herself that she feared Gabrielle might still be free. A boat passed by,—"suppose they should land and talk to me"—she thought, and she shook down her long fair hair, and laughed aloud to think they might take her for the Siren. And the passing fishermen, who crossed themselves as they saw her, and believed some evil influence lurked in the grace she added to the lovely landscape, were not so far wrong after all. And then Michel returned, and the astute knave drove the artful simpleton to Grandport, having much conversation by the way. She pressed no inconvenient questions, heard with complacency that Gabrielle was too rustic for Raoul, and of quite another class; that they were always quarreling when engaged, and what had happened, though painful for the moment, would in the end be best for all parties, "especially," added the Mayor with a bow, "as Doctor Wachter is evidently so much more fortunate in his present society, it was well

he should be freed from an unsuitable entanglement." They parted the best of friends, and Millicent returned to England.

Raoul was downstairs again, though very white and wan, when in the evening twilight she reached home. She looked at his clear-cut intellectual face, and thought what an escape he had had of marrying the peasant girl she had indeed seen in the far distance. A vague hope flushed his cheek as she entered, and he exclaimed—"Eh bien, you have seen her."

"Yes, and she was well. I believe she will be very happy."

"Where was she? did you speak of me?"

"No, no, I did not speak to her at all, and Monsieur Talbot implores your silence. I saw her leaning on a gate leading to the farm."

"Where she used to wait for me—poor child! Then they are at the farm, that was what Michel wanted."

"And she was dressed like a peasant."

"Was she, ma cherie, how lovely she must have looked. I *must* see her once more," he said fervently.

"You would only make her wretched. Why, they had a requiem for you. An old fisherwoman, Corvet was her name, told me all Valmont was there."

"Old Françoise still working! ah! I used to tell her we ought to move, Valmont was no place for a doctor; *les centinaires n'y meurent que par imprudence;* how gaily she would laugh! well, the requiem may not be so much too soon after all; if I do not recover you must tell her I was true to the last; I will leave a letter that will please her then."

"You must take heart," said the old doctor, "you are well through the fever, and no one knows better than you that men don't die of a love disappointment."

"Quite true, doctor, but they do die of not caring to recover. *N'importe,* I shall be better when I have work; to-morrow you shall take me to the surgical ward again."

"And, Raoul," said Millicent, "it may all be for the best. She is but a peasant, and as Monsieur Talbot says"—. Raoul started up. "I do not wish to hear what Talbot says, and, Millicent, you mean well, but you know nothing; never mention her name to me again, if I don't go at once to Valmont, I shall go there no more, but there is no use talking about it;" and he hastily left the room.

"That will all pass, Milly, and leave him in need of a

wife," said Doctor Holt, "but she must never expect to be preferred to a surgical ward! ah! he's a born doctor—such an intuition, such manual dexterity! I wish he were my son."

Raoul did indeed after this seem indifferent to everything but his profession; he was very grateful to the old doctor for introducing him to men in power, and procuring for him the Montreal appointment; grateful to the widow also for her care of him, and when in autumn he sailed for Canada, it was not alone. He married Millicent and she had her wish, yet it was not really fulfilled; her silent pre-occupied husband, who found his chief interests apart from her, was not the bright sympathetic Raoul she had first met. He threw himself heart and soul into his profession, becoming distinguished in it, and stifling weary cravings in scientific pursuits and work, Millicent's character, as he knew it better, never attracted him, and she was to him at best the mother of the boy born the following year, in whom his warmest affections centred. And he was called Gabriel, after the Norman maiden so tenderly remembered still. Thus Doctor Wachter's life and interests drifted far apart from Valmont, where Gabrielle lived on and thought of him as dead; and though a vague hope, that was almost a pain, still thrilled her at times of his reappearance, he did not return, and the years went on and on.

E. J. O.

(*To be continued.*)

Milla Forres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER XXII.

LIFE FROM THE DEAD.

NANCY and Elspet rejoiced in the change which, it soon became evident, had passed over Barbara. She was quiet that Sabbath evening when she returned from church, and seemed much occupied with her own thoughts, but when she did speak to them, all the petulance and impatience of her manner of late seemed to have passed away. She was like one recovering from a severe illness, —weak still, but convalescent,—and beginning again to take a quiet, peaceful pleasure in the things and people about her. The next morning she was up at her old early hour, and Nancy was surprised on coming in to breakfast to find a bouquet of early spring flowers, evidently of Barbara's arranging, on the breakfast table. She looked up with quiet pleasure.

"Why, Barbara," she said, "you have been in the garden already, I am so glad; it is quite like old days."

Barbara smiled and coloured. Nancy had been too kind to say much to her sister about the change that had come over her, and Barbara blushed to think how very apparent it must have been when her sister could be so much surprised by such a simple return to the old ways.

"Nancy," she said, as they lingered over the breakfast table, "you remember the commission old Peggy gave me on her death-bed, do you not?"

"Yes, to find her daughter and give her her Bible, was it not?"

"Yes, and her mother's blessing, and what remained over of her savings in the old stocking, after paying for her funeral. I have been too long of beginning to keep my promise, but I mean to begin now."

"But what will you do, Barbara? It is so many years ago that she disappeared, and, I suppose, they searched as much as they could for her at the time, did they not?"

"I suppose so, and yet I do not know; old Peggy was so broken-hearted at the disgrace, that I daresay she sat down in a sort of stunned way and didn't do much; besides, you know, she never would let any one speak to her about

her daughter, and that wasn't the way to hear any rumours that might have thrown light on where she had gone."

"But what will you do, Barbara; how will you set about it?"

"I don't know yet, but I think first I will go and speak to old Lauchlan M'Lauchlan; he was in the glen when it happened, and he was very fond of Peggy's daughter. I have heard that he was almost broken-hearted about her. I will go to his cottage after breakfast. Will you come with me?" Barbara added the last question somewhat timidly. She was conscious that of late she had rather repulsed her sister's offers to accompany her on her rambles, and she felt half-ashamed to ask her now. Tears of pleasure stood in Nancy's eyes as she said heartily,—

"That I will;" then coming up to her and throwing her arms round her neck, she added, wistfully, "I am so glad you want me again, Barbara." The words sent a pang of self-reproach through her sister's heart. She could not deny that it was true that of late she had *not* wanted her sister's company, nay, in her secret heart I do not think she wanted it now, as far as her own pleasure was concerned, but she had resolved that this secret pain of hers should no longer stand in the way of her plain, every-day duties—that, God helping her, in small things, as in great, she would be a "good soldier of Jesus Christ." She did not answer her sister's words, she merely fondled the pretty head that had taken refuge in her bosom. Nancy looked up by and bye with pleasure shining in her bright eyes.

"It is so nice to be made of once more," she said. Another pang to Barbara's heart; she had been missing it then, the old sisterly fondling. Poor little Nancy! Barbara's thoughts during these past months had been sometimes almost hard about her little sister. Somebody says, and says truly, "all creatures are angry at torture;" and, in the bitter torture of her own heart, Barbara had sometimes felt almost cruel towards the unconscious cause of her suffering. She knew it was not Nancy's fault, and yet the pain was so terrible, she could hardly help turning on its unconscious instrument. Besides, what need had Nancy of comfort, she thought bitterly to herself. *She* had a right to think and dream about Alaster as much as she liked, and to speak about him too.

It was true that it was all a fiction and a delusion. Alaster did not belong to Nancy, and Barbara exulted in her heart as she thought how much more really and truly he belonged to her; but then Nancy did not know—Nancy should never know—and as Barbara reasoned, what one doesn't know can't do one any harm! She half-despised Nancy, I think, that she had not found it out; she thought, if she had been in her place, she would have seen it all; nothing and nobody could have kept her from feeling that his heart had gone from her, and yet she was glad that mercifully her little sister was so blind. But, as she *was* so blind, what need had she for comfort or caresses from her? Had she not already enough and to spare? So she thought in her hard, black moods of suffering, and now it came to her with a pang, that after all the little sister had longed, and longed in vain, for kindness and sympathy from her. Barbara felt ashamed and humbled as proof after proof came before her, how, during these last months, she had been neglecting the plain every-day duties that God had given her, how much of a coward she had been, laying down the weapons of her warfare, and saying—"I can fight no longer, let me die." It was not in the least that the battle was over for her now, and peace and victory won; the battle was as sore in her heart as ever, and the pain not one whit less torturing. The only difference was (what difference could be greater) that she had recognised at last that she *had* a battle to fight, and a victory to win, and that, God helping her, she meant to do it. She would have many relapses into the old hopelessness, many a weary hour of struggle in the old slough of despond, but she had caught a glimpse of the light over the wicket gate, and in the main her eyes were directed thither.

After breakfast the two girls set out on their walk to old Lauchlan's cottage. The day was bright and frosty, and Nancy's spirits rose to exuberance as they walked smartly up the glen. It was so long since she had taken a walk with Barbara, and it was so like old times that she forgot her anxiety about her absent lover, and everything but her pleasure in the present. It took them a good hour's quick walking to get to the little cottage where Lauchlan lived. Their knock was answered by a bonny, tidy Highland lassie, with a sweet, modest face, and soft fawn-like eyes—old Lauchlan's grand-daughter. To their

enquiry, if her grandfather was within, she answered with a bright smile and a low curtsey.

"Ay, my leddies, will ye please to come in." Her manner had all that curious in-born Celtic courtesy, which gives the poorest Highlander a manner hardly to be rivalled at the most polished court of Europe. The girls entered, and found old Lauchlan sitting by a blazing peat fire. He was a stately-looking old man, with long white locks and a snow-white beard, and the sort of composed dignity so often seen among men of his age and race. He had been lame for many years, and unable to do anything for his own support, excepting to weave willow baskets, which he sold for any trifle he could get for them. He lived with his daughter and her husband (Phemie's parents), hard-working people, who had quite enough to do to keep bread in the mouths of their own large family, but who never grudged "the bit and the sup" to old Lauchlan—a thorough Highlander, and an enthusiastic Jacobite. It was he who had warned Alaster of "the bloodhounds watching the reefer's rock."

He rose with the help of his crutch as the young ladies entered and saluted them with the stately courtesy of an old courtier.

"You're brawly welcome, my leddies," he said, "old Lauchlan's a prood man that ye should sae honour his humble roof. Come your ways ben, my dears; Phemie, set seats for the young leddies close by the ingle nuik, for it's the bieldest bit this frosty weather."

"I am glad to see you looking so well, Lauchlan," said Barbara, "your rheumatism hasn't been troubling you this winter, I hope?"

"Whiles, my leddy, whiles, but I hae many mercies to be thankful for. And when heard ye frae the Colonel, and what news hae ye o' the cause?"

"Bad news, I'm afraid, Lauchlan; the Prince's army has been obliged to turn back from Derby; my father writes that Pitsligo begged the Prince to go on, but he listened to other counsellors; my father fears the cause is lost in England."

"Say ye sae, my dear? Wae am I that my auld ears should hae lived to hear it, but we'll hae a tuzzle for our richtfu' sovereign in auld Scotland yet. What thinks Milla Forres o' our chances here?"

"Indeed his letter is very gloomy, but I trust it may turn out better than he fears."

"Ay, ay, my dear, I trust sae, but he sud hae hearkened to Pitsligo, he's a wise man an' a good, a prince could hae nae better counsellor."

"I came here to-day, Lauchlan, on a special errand. I want you to tell me all you can remember about old Peggy's daughter, and the time she disappeared," said Barbara, beginning a new subject.

"About auld Peggy's dochter, my dear?" said the old man in a surprised tone, "it's a lang while sin' syne, an' a sad story; but I'll do my best to remember it gin it 'ill please ye to hear it; but it's a sad, sad story," and the old man shook his head gravely.

"I know it is, Lauchlan, but I would like very much to hear it, if you will tell it me," said Barbara.

"Aweel, Miss Barbara auld Lauchlan wad do mair nor that to do you a pleasure. Ay, she was a bonnie lassie an' a blythe, there was nane like her i' the country side. I mind her when she was but a toddlin' bairn, just like yin o' the fairy-folk I used to think, wi' her bricht een and her lang gowden curls, an' it wad be 'Lauchlan, is at ou'? gie wee Maggie a ride on ou's back,' every nicht when I cam' hame frae my wark. Auld Peggy and me were near neebors then. Ay, ay, she was a bonny bairn an' a winsome, I ne'er likit ane o' my ain sae weel as I likit wee Maggie; but its fifty year sin' syne, my dear, its fifty year, she'll be an auld woman noo, gin the Lord's no ta'en her oot o' this weary warld lang or noo, puir wee bonnie Maggie!' and the old man drew the sleeve of his coat over his eyes as he spoke.

"It is forty years, is it not, since she—went away," said Barbara, hesitating as to what word to use, yet anxious to bring the old man back from his reminiscences of Maggie's childhood to that point of her history.

"Ay is it, forty lang years, gin she's leeving yet, forty lang years o' sin and sorrow! puir, bonny Maggie!"

"Will you tell me all you can remember about that time, Lauchlan? and when she was last seen, and who with, and what people thought had become of her? I want very much to know, I have a reason for asking," said Barbara, colouring. Somehow she was shy about this quest of hers, it seemed such a wild undertaking, and she did not like to take even old Lauchlan, interested as he was in Maggie, fully into her confidence.

The old man looked surprised, but his Highland

courtesy prevented his asking questions which he saw would be unwelcome.

"I'll try an' mind, my dear, I'll try an' mind, but my memory's sair fallen off these late years." The old man paused a little and then went on. But we must keep his story for another chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"PUIR BONNY MAGGIE"

"I MIND fine the morning Peggy tell't me that wee Maggie was missing," continued old Lauchlan. "It was ae bricht day i' spring, April it was, for I mind I had been at the Aberdeen market the day afore wi' a lot o' Hielan' stirks, and the market day was aye the second week in April, an' I mind fine the sun was shinin', and the bit burn was sparklin', and the birdies were singin', and the cowslips and violets were a' out i' the grass. Ye'll think it queer, I'se warrant, that I should mind a' thae wee bits o' things, when my mind was sae ta'en up aboot Maggie, but that day, an' ilk thing aboot it, just seemed to be *brunt* into my brain. Weel, as I was saying, I had just finished my breakfast an' was setting aff to my wark,—I mind my wark that day should hae been to pleugh the high mains o' Milla Forres,—weel just as I was setting aff, Peggy cam' to the door. I thocht she lookit unco white an' scared like, so says I, 'What's wrang wi' ye, Peggy, my woman?' An' says she, in a half-whisper like, 'Lauchlan, Maggie's no come hame.' 'No come hame,' says I, 'whar's the lassie been till?' I spoke licht-like, for it ne'er cam' into my head that ought could be wrang in Maggie.' 'She gaed oot yestre'en,' says she, 'to see her cousin, Bess MacDougal, that's gane awa' to service in Glen Ross, and she's ne'er come hame yet.' I begood to be a bit frichted then mysel', for the road to Glen Ross was unco lanely i' thae days, and I thocht the bit lassie micht hae met in wi' fremyt folk that had done her mischief—or maybe she micht hae wandered on the hill, for there had been a mist on Benvoirlish the day afore, an' she had to cross a bit o' the hill on her way, but I didna let on to Peggy that I was frichted. 'Hoot, woman,' says I, 'the lassie's been ta'en up wi' the

new braws her cousin's gotten to gang tae her new place wi', and she's stayed ower late an' they've keepit her a' nicht, the days are no that lang yet, she'll be here i' no time, I'se warrant.' Peggy didna answer, but her face looked sma' an' anxious, and I couldna help feelin' mair anxious mysel' than I likit to let wit on, so says I :—'I'll no gang to my wark for a while yet, I'll wait wi' ye, Peggy, till the lass comes hame.' 'Thank ye, Lauchlan,' says she, an' I thocht there was a tear i' her e'e. Sae I went wi' Peggy to her cottage an' we sat there an' waited. I'll ne'er forget that waitin.' For awhile we talked, and I tell't Peggy about the Aberdeen market, an' the gran' price I had gotten for my stirks—I had gotten ten poun' Scots of ilk ane o' them, —but by an' bye we didna speak ony mair, an' just sat an' lookit at the clock, an' ilk hour it struck Peggy gied a start. At last when it had chappit twelve, I couldna wait ony langer, I had gotten that feart aboot the bit lassie. So says I, 'Peggy, my woman, I'm feart there's something wrang, I'll gang ower to Glen Ross.' She just sat quiet, and let me gang—I never was sae sorry for man or woman as I was that day for Peggy; she just seemed stunned like, for Maggie was the very licht o' her een. I walked owre the hill an' across the moor, an' lookit down every precipice for fear the bit lassie micht hae fallen ower in the mist. It was bricht clear sunshine, and I could see to the foot o' them a', but there was nae trace o' Maggie. Its but barely four miles to Glen Ross, an' I got there aboot yin o'clock. My heart was beating sae that I could hear it when I chappit at the door, and I think it near loupit out o' my mouth when Maggie's cousin Bess opened the door, and said she hadna seen Maggie ava yestre'en, nor for mony a week afore. I could mak' neither head nor tail o't, for I ken't that Maggie had been going ilk twa or three days to see her cousin, and help her wi' the new claithes she needed to gang to her new place, and noo Bess said she hadna seen her for mony a week! I gaed back again to Peggy wi' a heavy heart. A horrid thocht had come into my mind that Maggie must hae been deceivin' us, an' pretendin' to go to see her cousin, when she was after some errand she didna want her mither to ken o'; but I put it out o' my head. I couldna thole the thocht o't—that the bonny bricht lassie wi' her innocent face should hae been leeing to her mither a' the time! No that I thocht, even if she

had been leeing, that there was ony ither harm in't beyond the lee, for I wad hae ta'en my Bible oath ony day that Maggie was as an angel in heaven,—but I thocht maybe she micht hae gotten a lad that her mither didna think guid eneuch for her, an' she micht be keepin' it frae her mither, and gaein' oot to tryst wi' him when she said she was gane to her cousin's, but ony thocht o' ither ill ne'er cam' across my mind. Weel, I gaed back to Peggy wi' the ill news,—I ll ne'er forget her look till my dying day, when I tell't her Maggie hadna been to Glen Ross the day afore, an' that Bess said she hadna seen her for mony a lang day. She lookit just as if the life had been ta'en oot o' her, an' frae that day Peggy was ne'er like her auld sel' again. She used to be a cheery body, Peggy, wi' a blythe blink in her e'e, an' a sharp tongue o' her ain, wi' aye an answer at the tip o't, but after that day she was sort o' quiet-like—I ne'er heard her speak a sharp word again. Weel, we set a' the neebors to look through the country side for Maggie. An' a' the young men i' the village searched every fit o' Benvoirlish—there was mony a sair heart amang them, for Maggie was just the pride an' the pet o' the country. Puir Rab MacDougal was waur nor ony o' them. He was Maggie's cousin, Bess MacDougal's brither, and he had lo'ed Maggie frae the time he had pu'ed nuts and brambles for her when she was a bairn. They werna plighted, but I think a' body thocht they wad come thegither i' the end, and when Maggie was lost, he was just like ane fair distrackit. I think that frae the time that Peggy heard that Maggie had been leein' to her, an' no wi' her cousin at Glen Ross, she just gave up hope. If Maggie, that she had aye lippened to frae a bairn, an' had never fand tell her a lee as lang as she could mind, had been leein' to her aboot this, she could believe onything, there was naething ower bad to come out o't. But Rab wasna like that, he flared up at onybody that daured hint that Maggie micht hae gane awa' o' her ain will. She had been kidnapped, or she had been murdered, he said, an' lang after everybody else had given up lookin' for her in despair, he spent a' his hours, afore and after his wark, on Benvoirlish, and on the road to Glen Ross, looking at ilka craig-foot, an' in ilka ditch to find her body. He ne'er gied ower lookin' till ae day, a good month after Maggie was lost, he met wi' a band o' gipsies, and begood questioning them, as he questioned everybody, gin they

had seen onybody like her, and they tell't him that they had seen a bonny country lassie, the day she gaed awa', wi' a red cloak an' hood, like the yin Maggie had on, and a striped blue petticoat, in a braw carriage wi' a gentleman in a red coat, aboot five miles on the ither side o' Milla Forres. If I mind richt, Rab gaed to the place, and trackit the carriage wi' the gentleman in the red coat, and the bonny country lass as far as Aberdeen, and then he lost sicht o't, and though he tried lang, he ne'er could get anither trace o' her. He came back here for a few months, an' then he gied up his farm an' moved into Perthshire; he said he couldna live i' Milla Forres where a' thing minded him o' Maggie. An', that's a' I can tell ye o' puir Maggie, my leddy; it's a sad story, a sad story!" said old Lauchlan.

"Thank you, Lauchlan," said Barbara, "it is indeed a sad story! Is Rab MacDougal living yet, and can you tell me where his new farm was?

"I kenna gin he be leevin' yet, they went clean awa' frae the country side, and gin he *is* leevin', he'll be an auld man, no far aff seventy, but I mind the name o' his farm first seemed to me as if it had been ca'ed for Maggie, it's name was Margaret's Cleuch, an' I think I've heard tell it was no that far frae the place whaur the kings were crownit, when auld Scotland had a king o' her ain."

JEANIE MORISON.

(*To be continued.*)

Mother Eve.

Oh, Mother Eve, the years have rolled,
And thou on high art set:
Thy brows are crowned with burnished gold,
A radiant coronet.

And pleasant is the sunny steep,
Where heaven-white lilies grow—
Thy children toil, thy children weep,
Thy children sin below.

Oh, Mother Eve, thy heart must bleed,
Even on that happy shore,
To see thy children's bitter need,
And all their anguish sore.

To think upon that fruit which grew
 Beside Euphrates' tide—
That bitter fruit whose ashes strew
 Our Knowledge, and our Pride.

Poor Mother! lost thy Motherhood—
 Thy children look to see
In that supremest land of good
 A mother, and not thee!

But Mother, still thy Motherhood
 Is worth thy Mother pain,
For One, through cradle and through Rood,
 Hath bought it thee again,

The promise, given in utmost need,
 Has never been gainsaid;
In latter days the woman's seed
 Has bruised the Serpent's head.

And if the angels all rejoice
 Throughout the jasper halls
When first the Prodigal's faint voice
 Upon the Father calls,

Oh, Mother! how *thy* harp must wake
 The echoes round the sea,
In praise of Him, who, for love's sake,
 Hath done great things for thee.

R.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

Part IV.

Ten years had come and gone since Raoul Wachter's disappearance from Normandy. It was August again, when one lovely afternoon the Vicomte de Frajou Rochesembeau was lying on the shingly beach of Valmont, under the shadow of an old battered boat drawn up just beyond reach of the tide. De Frajou was as battered as the boat, he was lame from a wound, rheumatic from exposure, and wasted by fever; however, as he always expected to be used up in the

service, at least he was not disappointed, and kept up a good heart still, and a keen eye for all around him. Now, the steep shingle gave him a luxurious support for his back; the little tide waves that broke close to his feet, each with its own murmurous roll of pebbles and plash of falling waters, soothed his nerves; the bright sea, and high white cliffs enclosing the bay, and the sea-birds sailing by with wide wings, delighted his eyes, and he thrilled with an unexpected sensation of possible recovery. He had only arrived the day before at Valmont, and already, as he told his landlady, Madame Lecœur, he had become reconciled to his health, (with which he had before quarrelled *à l'outrance*) for bringing him to so sweet a place. She and her fisherman husband were now approaching him, and with them was a handsome brunette, dressed in a modification of the *costume du pays*, whose gold ornaments and rich lace bespoke her a person of consideration. Madame Lecœur explained,—"It is Mademoiselle Talbot, who has just been asking us to the harvest-home supper and dance at the Grande Ferme, and I said I would not leave Monsieur le Colonel's supper; but Mademoiselle thinks perhaps Monsieur would come himself, it is such a pretty sight."

De Frajou had his kepi off to Gabrielle as he answered, —"I should be charmed; I am of no use at a dance, but if Mademoiselle would allow me to drive up and see the others."

"If Monsieur le Colonel would so far honour my uncle and me, it would make our assemblée a certain success," said Gabrielle, with a bright look, as she turned away; and De Frajou hunted his memory for some half-forgotten names, till he suddenly asked Dame Lecœur the Christian name of the lady.

"Gabrielle," she replied, "an angel's name and nature; she is like a mother to the country-side, rich, and good, and generous. Ah! if there were more like her!"

"And was she the fiancée of Doctor Raoul Wachter? And is the Mermaid's Fountain here?"

"Ah, Monsieur knows the whole story. It was much talked of at the time; it is now ten years since the young doctor vanished—no trace—never a word more heard of him. Ah, la sirène!"

De Frajou kept his counsel, and heard all that she had to tell. Gabrielle was still unmarried, though she had once been engaged to the Mayor Michel Talbot, and that

might be a marriage yet. She had of late been in Germany with her aunt Marie, whose health had failed, and who had died about a year ago; a great loss to Gabrielle, who now lived with her uncle only, who was getting old, and never had more than a calf's head on his shoulders. But the Mermaid had become more rampant than ever; two or three young men had vanished since the doctor's time, "one was wrecked," put in Jaques, "and one had gone with the smugglers."

"N'importe, fearful noises were often heard there, yells and cries and strange songs, and the mayor himself had had a narrow escape. Eight years ago the Siren had actually caught him, but, on his saying an *Ave*, with a wild shriek she had leapt into the sea. Many had seen her then."

"You rouse my curiosity delightfully," said the Colonel. "Look here, Jaques, this very evening, let us have the boat out and row round there, and then go up the cliff to the farm."

"Monsieur knows the way, and everything," gasped the *bourgeoise*.

"Perhaps I have seen the Siren."

"But the cliff is too steep for Monsieur, and then it is still a long way to the farm," urged Jaques.

"No fear," said the Colonel, "Joseph can help me anywhere, and we can have a carriage at the top of the *falaise*."

By sunset De Frajou and Joseph, his devoted valet, arrived in a little sailing boat, close under the fountain. The tide was high and the sea was calm, and the boat slipped alongside of a rock, washed by water two fathoms deep, yet so clear, that the waving weed and glancing fish cast shadows on the sunny green of the sand far below. The high cliffs descending like walls of ivory in straight precipices to the water, but worn where they ran into headlands, into fantastic arches and spires, the dark green moss canopy in front, glittering with water drops, the lonely column reflected in the clear wavelets, and the silver sea sweeping round the whole northern and western horizon—all solitude, yet all alive with the stir of ocean life, moved De Frajou strangely. He could hardly help expecting some old poetic wonder to meet him, as he scrambled to the high narrow cleft which formed the mouth of the neighbouring cave, the spot which the boatman considered to be especially haunted. One in-

deed implored him not to enter, under the pretext that the walking was bad, but with Joseph's arm he got in and found it dry and large. The chalk and flint vault was worn into the strangest shapes, columns and fretted spires; and the last glimmer of light in the inner darkness showed a fantastic form, huge and veiled like some shapeless giant brandishing a skeleton arm. The bad reputation of the cavern, and the evident desire of the boatmen to hurry him away stimulated the Colonel's keen wits, and he sought about like a terrier on the scent of an otter, till the suspicion was confirmed in his own mind that the Mermaid patronised smuggling.

It took him so long to mount the steep cliff, that it was moonlight as he drove across the fields to the grove which enclosed the farm. The higher notes of fiddles and clarionettes reached him, lights twinkled in the greenery; and then in a moment he passed from the quiet open fields, to a scene of animation under the trees. A noble supper was spread in the brightly-lighted barn, whose wide doors and windows displayed it temptingly to the people who passed outside. Some were dancing a great ronde under the chestnut trees, and singing too as they swayed to and fro, while the instruments supported the voices. There may have been roughness in the song, and rusticity in the dance, but the outer air, and solemn trees, and great spaces, lent to all a touching naïve charm. It seemed so suitable, that while the young people were moving hand in hand to the music, their elders should be busy with their prosaic cares about food and entertainment, while the old people sat chatting cosily together, idle again because their day was also waning, and the time of rest was near. Gaspard and Gabrielle left the supper table when the Colonel was announced; he declined supper, but drank the health of the company, and with Gabrielle on his arm, sauntered down towards the dancers. He found her a charming companion; her beauty, if a little worn, was more refined and winning than formerly; indeed she had cultivated herself for Raoul's sake, till she was too superior to the people with whom she usually lived, to run much chance of a new attachment. Only she had been very lonely since her aunt's death, and Michel founded some hopes on this, for he had over her a certain influence which a clever man of steady purpose seldom fails to obtain.

"Listen to the words they are singing," she remarked

to the Colonel, "strange that they should dance to them, when one thinks how sad a meaning they may have for so many here."

The tune was an old sea song, and sounded like an accompaniment to the hauling of ropes, and dashing of waves. Some of the words ran thus:—

"Il était une barque a trente matelots,
Sur le bord de l'isle, sur le bord de l'eau.
Qu' avez vous la belle que vous fait tant pleurer,
Pleurez-vous votre pére, ou un de vos parens?
Je pleure une brigolette partie la voile au vent,
Le perroquet en l'aire, le vent en arrière
Est parti pour la traite avec mon bel amant."

"Well, all is not lost that is in danger," said the Colonel, "and if a sailor is lost, it is in the way of his trade; let him be merry till his time comes. Mademoiselle, I call this charming; how much more delightful than a stifling ball indoors; I declare I should like to stop in this country like one of the worn-out old boats I see hauled up hereabouts, getting overgrown with creepers and flowers, all their wanderings done, spending a fat old age among those pleasant people."

"Monsieur amuses himself with our rusticity," she replied; "to me, indeed, Valmont is pleasant at all times —the season of the mackeral, the season of the herring, haytime and harvest, but you others, when the *saison des bains* is over, comes the *saison des ennuies* for the strangers."

"Ennui, indeed!" said De Frajou, "I never felt it in all my life, not in a fort in Africa, where the post was the only event, and that once a month; and I do not feel myself a stranger here, I assure you."

At this moment Joseph came up, much gravity and a shade of of reproof in his tone,—"Had I not better bring the carriage round here for Monsieur; it is late, and after the long walk"—

"Joseph, if you say a word more, I shall give you in charge to the strongest *danseuse* in the ronde. What, have we not liberty here? *A bas les tyrans,*" and he drew Gabrielle aside with him into the solitude of the orchard wood. "It is nevertheless true that I must be tyrannised over by Joseph, and by a doctor too, now; is there a good one here at Valmont?" He glanced at Gabrielle's face,—do you still care for the former doctor, was his real question.

She coloured as she answered "One like the others; nothing remarkable, I believe."

"I said just now I did not feel like a stranger here, continued De Frajou, in a graver tone, "do you know that I seem to myself to have seen all this before? I have only, however, heard it all described, and you too, Mademoiselle, by a dear friend of mine who has vanished, I fear, these many years,—Raoul Wachter!"

Gabrielle dropped his arm, but clung to the tree beside her as she said,—"Not here, not now, Monsieur, as you know what he was to me, don't speak of him now; and yet, how should you, how did you know? You never were here before. Oh, *de grace*, speak."

She sat down on the gnarled tree-root, and he threw himself down at her feet. "It is eight years since I have heard of Raoul—a man who for some months was like a brother to me; but in my profession we are used to partings; we are true friends, but do not pretend to regret each other long. I will tell you all I know, more, evidently, than you do."

"Tell me, then," and her soul was in her voice, "Why did he leave Valmont, and why did he never write?"

"He was made prisoner by an Algerine cruiser, and was long detained by the Moors; one letter at least did not reach you, because our courier was killed. It was in Algiers I knew him, and how fondly he talked of you, and how he feared you might have been offended at that last dance," and he briefly ran over Raoul's story, ending by, —"Now you should go in, you have heard enough for to-night, and I am quite tired out. Would you meet me to-morrow in Valmont, say in the church porch, and I will give you all details."

Gabrielle seemed almost incapable of speech or motion, but she rose mechanically and walked with the Colonel to the house door. "Enfin, enfin des nouvelles," she said, dreamily, pressing her hair back from her forehead, "yes, I will come to-morrow—so, many thanks. I feel quite confused, tell them all; good night," and she disappeared indoors, while De Frajou asked for his carriage.

Gaspard and Michel hastened up to say good-night, and as he prepared to drive off—"Mademoiselle has gone in," he explained, "she was a little overpowered, and no wonder, for I brought her news, alas! eight years old, but still news of my friend Dr Wachter." He told it in a few words; Michel turned aside, and the darkness concealed that he was as pale as death; Gaspard was keenly excited, and the news was echoing among all the guests

as De Frajou drove away, though damped by the mayor's remark that all the same the Doctor was faithless or dead, as eight years had to be accounted for.

Next morning found Gabrielle, at the appointed hour, seated in the deep church porch. Here the Vicomte soon joined her, and told her all: Raoul's dashing escape, the military expeditions, the quiet evenings, when they chatted about her and Valmont on the terrace the weary days of labour and sickness, Raoul's departure—"and then I only heard once more from Bordeaux, a most cheerful letter. He was almost well then, and I never doubted but he had rejoined you, and was living too happily to have a thought to spare for a *pauvre diable* at the wars; besides I soon left Sidi Rhean, which confused my address. Still I did think he might have written, and now I don't know what to think. I fear the fever may have taken a bad turn, or something else might have occurred," and his thoughts recurred to Mrs Eltham; "at any rate I shall write to English friends and get some light thrown on the matter."

"I will not encourage myself in false hopes," Gabrielle said at last, "this long silence looks like death;—but how much of happiness you have brought me. The hard doubt is gone from my mind, and Raoul seems brought near me again, with so much more about him to think of.

"And well you may think of him," said De Frajou warmly, "his was a loyal heart, and he was such a clever surgeon too; I wish I could see him now; not that anything could make much difference. So this is the old church he described to me," he added as they passed through the door and stood under the massive stone vaulting of the Norman nave in the dim light. One sunbeam had found its way through a high lancet window in the central tower, and stained the pavement with crimson and gold. The church in its graceful strength of line and proportion seemed in harmony with the French gentleman of chivalrous bearing and long descent who was looking at it with attentive admiration. Alas! that both types belong to the past, and the stucco glare of modern French architecture seems more in accordance with the present national character.

"And there is the one mirror in the lantern that survived the Revolution; I think, dear Demoiselle, if I find Raoul for you, you might put in another with the De

Frajou blazon on it, which will soon exist only in ancient records and on old tombs."

"No, no, he shall cure you, and you will restore the Chateau de Rocheambeau," said Gabrielle; then with a sigh, "but these are sweet foolish dreams, here I dare to face the reality."

De Frajou, who was much excited by the conversation, which had lasted two hours, gathered some hope from the improbability of Raoul's death having occurred without being reported; and now leaving Gabrielle in the church, he hurried straight off to the mayor's house, and requested to see his papers, of which he understood M. Talbot was the custodian. Michel produced them and the colonel looked at them carefully.

"This one have the kindness to lend me," he said, taking up a certificate from a leading Parisian surgeon, "I shall send it to Dr D. to guide our enquiries."

"Pardon, Monsieur," said Michel, "but we dare not give over deposited papers to the *premier venu*, not even to officers of distinction, without—

De Frajou looked keenly at Michel. His acute perception of character was a by-word in the army, and he at once conceived a strong though undefined suspicion of the mayor. "Without a formal receipt, Monsieur doubtless wishes to say," he replied, "Well, I will give it for all the papers of my friend, while mentioning that I think an extraordinary supineness about enquiries after Doctor Wachter has been shown in this affair. The innocence of this little town is charming; strange disappearances, and appearances that elsewhere would be attributed to smuggling, are here accepted as the work of a siren! I have the honour to wish Monsieur good morning."

Michel trembled with fear and rage. Would the news of his own treachery or of Raoul's marriage come first? The latter he expected, as Raoul was probably in Canada. He might yet have time to play a last card which might enable him to secure the heiress, and he wrote at once to a friend and associate whom we have met before. Captain Elliot, formerly mate of the "Ziama," now commanded a trim little yawl, of which he was chief owner, which did a pretty piece of business in "the free-trade," as smuggling, then a good deal practised between England and France, was euphoniously called. About a year previously, Elliot seemed likely to be brought into collision with Michel in

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his official capacity; and he had then, hoping to propitiate him, mentioned that he could throw some light on the fate of his missing fellow-townsman. He soon, however, perceived that the secret, on the contrary, was a trump card in his hand against the mayor, and he used it with much address. Michel did not dare to move against him, and therefore determined to profit by him. The cave by the fountain, with its haunted reputation, and the great farm above, with its ample barns and cellars, were an excellent landing-place and depôt for smuggled goods. Gaspard, dull yet grasping, had been drawn into their transactions by Michel, and even more deeply committed. Gabrielle had some suspicions, but every effort was made to keep all from her knowledge, and the smugglers took care that unexplained sounds and strange lights should keep up the bad name of the cave. Now Michel wrote to Elliot's English address, requesting him, whenever he received the letter, to come in ballast to the fountain, so as to take off, without any delay, the goods in store; for he feared a meddling colonel at Valmont had some suspicions of their trade. He also wrote to resign the mayorship of Valmont and his other offices, feeling his character might be affected by coming disclosures; and made arrangements for placing his money in English investments. Like a prudent general, he arranged all for defeat, while still hoping for victory.

De Frajou also had letters to write, one to Raoul, detailing his meeting with Gabrielle, which he enclosed to a friend in the French Embassy in London, asking him to find out what he could, through Sir James Eltham, of the fate of Dr Wachter. Another letter he sent to the great Dr D. in Paris, enclosing his own certificate, and asking if, in the medical circles of Paris, anything had lately been heard of this "remarkably promising pupil." So all the letters were in the post, and to some at Valmont the moment of the postal delivery became one of thrilling anxiety. Raoul had become once more the chief hero of Valmont gossip, and the Colonel, as he rested on the beach, or sat on a capstan among the brown fishing boats, fresh drawn from the sea, had many questions to answer about the popular young doctor. Most days Gabrielle came down and met him on the *plage*, drinking in eagerly all the little details he had to tell. She felt as if she loved Raoul better than ever, and latterly each post with no letter brought on a sort of nervous agitation she

found it hard to master. Any certainty would, she thought, be welcome, after ten years of anxiety and doubt; but she was mistaken. More than a fortnight had passed, and the silence of Dr D. at last was becoming strange. Then one morning Joseph brought two letters together to his master, one from Barèges, the other from London. Eagerly the Colonel opened and read, first, apologies from the great surgeon for the delay in answering, caused by his Pyreneean tour. Then, "Dr Raoul Wachter has been for some years resident in Montreal, Canada, but his adoption of the name Walter may have caused his former acquaintances to lose sight of him. He has amply justified my former good opinion of him, has won a high reputation, and among other things, has initiated a new way of performing an operation which has been generally adopted. I have been in correspondence with him on professional subjects, and am now in hopes of inducing him to return to France. He married several years ago, and, I think, has a family, but I am not sure. I shall have pleasure in recalling you to him when next I write, and meanwhile, enclose his Montreal address."

The other letter from the Attaché mentioned that Sir James Eltham was cruising somewhere, but, through his people, there had been in no difficulty in ascertaining that Raoul Wachter or Walter had, eight years ago, married Mrs Eltham, and gone out to Canada. The letter addressed to him had been sent to Dr Holt, his father-in-law, who would know well where to forward it.

There could be no doubt about the truth of the intelligence, unexpected and utterly inexplicable as it was to the Colonel. "He has been fool enough to surrender *à discretion* to the Amazon; never trust the best of men with any woman on board ship," he said, as in vexation he crushed up the surgeon's letter. A postscript caught his eye, and he read,—"I return the *copy* of the certificate I really did give Wachter; but as it closely mimics my handwriting, it ought to be marked *copy;* for as it stands, it is a clumsy forgery." The Colonel's busy brain began to work on this new mystery, with an ever-deepening suspicion of Michel. Meanwhile he had before him first the wretched task of telling Gabrielle that the hopes he had so rashly excited were doomed to bitter disappointment, and he started on his distasteful errand for the farm.

E. J. O.

(To be continued.)

At Home and Far Away.

They slowly walked together o'er the hill,—
The wooded hill that sloping high and steep
Throws far its purple shadow o'er the moor,
And overhangs the river dark and deep.
And o'er their heads the listening leaflets stirred,
And at their feet their green reflections flung,
And all the air was filled with sunset sheen
And rich with softest lays by soaring wild-birds sung:

And ever as the shadows longer fell,
And deeper grew the purple of the hill,
And darker o'er the river swept the boughs,
And one by one the warbling birds were still,
They slowly onward went with lingering pace,
And thought to thought responded, each to each,
For in their hearts was gladness full and sweet,
And on their lips the words that love alone can teach.

But when the summer's flower-crowned youth was o'er,
And autumn's golden reign in heav'n rode high,
And russet heather clustered on the hill,
And leaves blushed red to know the winter nigh,
Along the wonted path she wandered lone,
Her thoughts with him who where the soft winds fail,
And hot suns blaze, and fairy islets glow,
On orient ocean's breast, spread wide his shining sail.

"With spring I will return," he said, and she
Lived only on those words, and hope made bright
Her waiting life, as rolled the season on
From autumn's eve to winter's dreary night.
But with the snows a way-worn letter came,
Its border and its seal were black—Ah me,
For her, for her now all the world is dark,
Its life, its love, with him lie buried in the sea!

Melensa.

Some Defects in Education.

I

THERE can be little doubt that of all the questions of the day Education is that which excites the most general attention All feel that even if they themselves are past the age at which new conclusions on the subject can have any very definite importance to them, it yet touches, or must one day touch them in their families their friends or their dependants, besides the indirect influence which their own convictions in regard to it must ever have on their opinions on other topics I do not now refer to the various views on compulsory education to the vexed question as to what forms the rightful scheme of education for women nor to the difficulty of judgment as to the best means of imparting knowledge Independent of all this I have a deep conviction that there are certain neglected elements in education, the consideration of which is a subject almost equally worthy of attention, that there are defects in education, even in some of the best schemes now advocated, which the growth of intelligence and an appreciation of the true aim of education will we may confidently hope, ere long to a greater or less extent remedy

In a century like this, bursting with the importance of its newly opened schemes of education, and thirsting for the results of their trial, it is but natural that the energetic minds of the reformers should overlook some subtler elements, and in their zeal for the practical results of their more enlightened schemes, forget the delicacy and complexity of that infinitely varying instrument, the human mind, which, do and say what we will, we shall in almost every case find it both impossible and injurious to mould to a prescribed pattern, for the mechanical attainment of prescribed ends.

It will be apparent from what I have said, that I accept the word education in a somewhat different signification from the common and superficial one, which includes simply the *acquisition of knowledge*. It is, therefore, necessary for me to show what I mean by education, as distinguished from the modern *schemes* of education, which last I have already said I believe to possess several distinct defects, and I must first observe that I take it in its widest

sense, as including both the *acquisition of knowledge* and the *cultivation of the faculties.* Its widest sense; for the latter named division of our education (*i.e.*, our education apart from the conception of any *scheme* of education) embraces all the influences of life. The first division is that in which we are personally and actively acquisitive; and the second is, for the most part, that in which we are passively affected—we the passive recipients of influences external to ourselves. The cultivation of the mind is, of course, furthered in a mechanical way by our personal study, as well as by outward influence; but we are even then in a manner passive under the means by which such cultivation is brought about. The two are, in fact, always found in juxta-position,—so intimately and constantly blended that it is often difficult to tell how far our culture or our knowledge is due to active or passive influences; though I believe it is possible to distinguish them.

I am aware that in this conception of the two factors in our education, in the distinction between ourselves as active and passive, between personal and external influences, there is nothing very new. Notwithstanding, to the misapprehension or partial ignoring of this dual influence, I must attribute some defects I cannot but note in the majority of the various attempts which are made towards the education of youth. The two are closely allied; but the separate treatment each requires, the training of the faculty which *energises* for improvement or knowledge, and the training of the faculty which is *passively recipient* of outward educational influences, is not recognised.

Now, in the training of the second of these two factors lies the first defect I shall speak of. It is this. The education of the majority of children is destitute of any effort to awaken a *feeling for art.* The capacity to receive the influences of art is not aroused. Art, in any and all of its branches, music, literature, painting, sculpture, is to them, as a direct educational influence, a dead letter.

At first sight this may seem a startling assertion—that the want, in the majority of people, *i.e.*, the ordinary beings we meet in every-day life, of a *feeling for art*, is due to a defect, a remediable defect, in their education. But that it is so, and to a very large extent, I would try to show. And first, I believe that the feeling is to be, can be supplied by education. I argue this from the premiss

that the capacity for the appreciation of art is *latent in the mind.* Like all our tastes and talents, it requires to be called forth and exercised before it will develop. I do not, however, presume to argue for its strictly universal latency; I limit my theory to the great majority. And yet, inasmuch as no one is, I think, exempt from the influence of art in some of its forms, it seems almost a legitimate belief that all must have, in some degree, the capacity for appreciating it.

As an argument that this capacity is at any rate very generally latent, may we not take the fact that the feeling for, the appreciation of, art, so often comes to us of itself (when it does so at all) in later life. Thought and the experience of life seem to show us, to awaken us to the conviction of an æsthetic side of things, besides helping us to assimilate the influences of the arts themselves, properly so called. This aspect of our surroundings begins to wear for us a visage of attraction and reality; and we then sadly recollect our wasted opportunities, and heedless, though perhaps not culpable, neglect (for we knew no better) of much that, if it had received our attention, would have raised the normal tone of our feeling, and so given us a higher personal pleasure and satisfaction, as well as enabled us to help and advance the higher life of the world.

Now, by this *feeling for art,* I do not mean genius, or even talent, in any department. *That* is the special gift of the few. And further, those who do possess talent (for I will not talk of genius) in any one department, too often suffer, with ordinary mortals, from neglect of the training of their feeling for and appreciation of the others. This neglect reacts, and must react, to the detriment of their own special subject; for the wider our sympathies, the more enlightened and just our views in any particular department. Special talent will generally make itself felt; it is not the neglect of the active, constructive part of the art faculty that I lament, it is the apathy under which so many lie as to what is done in art by its expressers. Yet we cannot blame them so much, for the country to be explored has never been shown them.

To return to the premiss. I think all our experience goes to show this latency of a feeling for art in most people. We see its manifestation in the almost universal love of what is beautiful in nature. This is its natural source; and if this love of the beautiful in nature were

cultivated, both itself would be increased, and a comprehension of its intellectual equivalent, art, would be generated. Both the love of nature and of art is the love of what is beautiful, best, enduring, and therefore divine, perfect, and true. I do not attempt to prove that all have naturally, if but in the germ, a belief and love of these principles. I take this as long since proved; and I think the whole course of the world, and all that has been accomplished by the human mind, show that art does really participate in these fundamental principles, and that the love and pursuit of art will help them to prevail.

That the want of this *feeling for art* is a want, much of what I have already said in arguing that the want is to be supplied by education, goes to show. Let me, however, again state what comes to be the main argument against its omission. If it be true that a training to appreciate art is a means of awakening or strengthening the love of the beautiful and the perfect, then it cannot be denied that the omission of such training is a want of real importance. It is a want to the individual; for the purest pleasure of which man's intellect is capable, the participation in and possession of these high principles of beauty and truth, is thus awanting in its fullest extent, *i.e.*, in *all* the provinces which these principles animate. It is a want to the community; for according to the spread of a knowledge and love of these principles may we expect results in the various fields of art. If the creative and irrepressible work in art is not affected by it, it yet influences the attainments of the interpreters and encouragers of the works of genius.

To sum up. I lament the want of any attempt at training in the love, and appreciation, and principles of art, because one of the greatest sources of mental culture, a means of bringing the mind in contact with the elevating principles of beauty and truth, is thus neglected. And again; because the knowledge and love of these principles form one of the best antidotes to the exclusive pursuit of what are called practical aims—too often only another name for those that are petty and selfish. The highest object of education is not to acquire success in any particular line,—this, though necessary, is subordinate,—it is the elevation of tone and character, the education of *sentiment*; and to this indubitably have we shown the pursuit of art to conduce.

Nor are we even, on the other hand, entirely destitute of practical reasons for this education in art. The immense number who have leisure, and are yet prevented from having any fixed definite occupation, form an army of volunteers whose time, devoted to study of art as it has been put before them, would doubtless accomplish much. Often they do not think of such a direction for their energies as possible; it has never occurred to them. Were these scantly tenanted fields pointed out to them in their early training, they could not complain of ignorance. I feel that it is indeed in these multitudes of unemployed that the training I advocate would bear fruit. It might not briug many more to swell the traiu of genius, but may we not believe, according to the beautiful theory of George Eliot's Dorothea,—"By desiring what is perfectly good, even when we cannot do what we would, we are part of the divine power against evil,—widening the skirts of light, and making the struggle with darkness narrower."

Not to give a handle to those who vaunt "practical education," let me say a few words as to how this training is to be supplied. And I must here return to my first remarks, as to the relative value of the acquisition of knowledge and mental culture. It would be in the highest degree impracticable to expect girls and boys to be all trained in the details and technicalities of the arts. I write of those who have not talent, and to whom, therefore, such training would be wearisome, perhaps unintelligible. It is not that faculty which acquires a knowledge of facts, but that which is passively recipient of outward influence, which is the medium of such training as I speak of. The young mind must be subjected to influences which shall awaken in it its latent feelings. Remember it is the *feeling for art*, as the exponent of what is true, beautiful, perfect, that I wish to be trained and developed. And no amount of knowledge of technicalities will arouse this feeling; though, where attainable, it may strengthen it. In this way it is seen that I do not advocate a more universal teaching of the practice, say even of music and painting; the reverse rather. I do not wish an increased mediocre execution. My aim rather comes to this;—that the *feeling for art*, with what amount of study circumstances and tastes will permit, should arise from, and be engendered by, the sense of obligation to know the good, perfect, enduring, and there-

fore divine. It resolves itself into a moral duty. The responsibility then of the teacher is to awaken this sense of obligation; to present to the pupil the results of art, and to show how they, like moral rectitude, after which all are endeavouring, are the results of these eternal principles of perfection.

Lastly, we must not dogmatize. Strong feeling or tastes in one direction may exclude interest in others, may annul any influences exerted in favour of art in general. The sad experiences of life may destroy the power to aim at the cultivation of what is abstractedly great and true. The bent to the practical may be too strong for the latent emotional principle. And I cannot say that it should not be well for the world for such exceptional instances to be always found.

I purposed, in this paper, to speak of some other and kindred defects in education; but my subject has so grown upon me, that I must reserve meanwhile what I have to say in hopes of returning to it at some future time.

NOLI-ME-TANGERE.

The Consecrated Knight.

HE rose up from the dreams of youth, and braced
His armour on, and took his lance in hand,
Untried, and parted. Morning broke and blush'd
Her rosy greeting to the violet hills;
And the sweet lark's jubilant anthem rose
Over the dewy earth. Thro' the still woods,
Odorous with blooms of summer. rode he on;
Over the sunny uplands, by the streams
That murmur'd, many-voic'd, towards the sea.
And as he went, it seem'd that all the way
Broke to new beauty at his very feet.
He pluck'd the fairest flowers, and wove of them
A chaplet for his casque, which hid the bough
Of laurel he had chosen for his crest;
And bound bright blossoms round his sword, and rode
Radiant and careless.

With the noon-tide came
A storm. The flowers he erst had pluck'd, all bruis'd
And faded, fell from off his helm and sheath;
His arms were rusted, and the way was long.

Now as he journey'd on, and yet the rain
Rush'd down, and thunder darken'd all the sky,
He spied a wayside chapel, all alone,
Rais'd on a rocky place, of stone unknown.
And there he lighted down, and enter'd in,
And laid him down, all weary, on the floor
Before the altar, and he dream'd a dream.

It seem'd that all the place was fill'd with light;
And thro' the open doors came in a crowd
In long procession; and they fill'd the church.
All there were sad and weary, wounded men
And women weeping, and they rais'd their hands
And wail'd—"Lord, give us help, for sore on us
Presses the foe; we know not where to flee."
Then from the Rood there came a sweet low voice,
And the sad cries were hush'd, and all were still.
"Where is the champion I sent forth to-day,
To battle? where the consecrated knight,
Who vow'd himself to Me?" The voices rose
Once more, "He sleepeth, Lord, behold and see.
And all this day he passed and saw us not,
And all our prayers and tears were vain to him;
He saw us not because he sought not. Now
We perish!"

Then the young knight look'd and saw
Himself, with rusted mail, and wither'd flowers,
Asleep; and yet an elder self, whose face
Show'd signs of years, and the sad stamp and seal
Of faded hope and wasted days in vain.
And round him plain'd the voices, all unheard,
Save by that One, Who answer'd yet again:
"Awake, arise, O sleeper! and be strong.
Learn, that thy armour was not given for this,
The toy and brightness of a summer day,
Not for the sunshine only, but for storm;
Not for thyself, but for these suffering ones,
And so for Me in them. Know that thy hope
Must not be happiness, or even rest,
Till work be done, and labour ended well."
Then silence.

And he rose and took his way
From out the church, and rode into the storm.

And all the way it seem'd as if in truth
His eyes were open'd, and he saw the weak,
Oppress'd, and sorrowful about his path.
For where the flowers had bloom'd and birds had sung
They were no more, but pain, and tears, and care.
And all cried wearily to him for help,
"O thou, who art our champion, give us aid!
So press'd he on and fought; and from his mail,
And from his blade unsheath'd faded the rust,
Until the sunset splendour smote his brow.
And lo, where the poor flowers he erst had pluck'd
So eagerly had faded long ago,
Upon his helm there shone a goodly wreath
Of amaranth and of asphodel.

And when
Night fell, it brought him endless peace.

YOLANDE.

Ghosts!

WHO does not welcome a ghost story? except those, indeed, who feel the excitement to their imagination too great to be pleasurable; and even those, with very few exceptions, enjoy a startling story which ends in being clearly explained away.

I confess to a distinct preference for those stories which admit of, or at least offer, *no* explanation,—such as the capital one of a Swiss ghost, to whom we were last Christmas introduced by E. J. O.

Exactly such a ghost should I like to see—a mysterious, interesting-looking ghost, so sociably disposed as to visit a considerable circle at once; for I do not profess any inclination to engross the society or conversation of a ghost at midnight, in a secluded chamber, after the gas is out, and the room merely lighted by a gleam of firelight, or—oh, horrible!—the blue light of its own countenance! Not at all. I should much prefer that a few strong-minded friends should share the pleasure with me. There would be this advantage, too, in such an arrangement;—my friends to whom I told the tale in after days could not say it was a dream, a nightmare, a freak of an excitable imagination, and explain it away, as we so readily do our neighbour's wonderful experiences.

There is a great charm in E. J. O.'s ghost. There were plenty of witnesses, yet, while leaving abundant evidence behind her, she did not unpleasantly obtrude the fact of her ghostship at the time of her presence. No one was at all unduly excited at the time, and yet who can deny the overwhelming evidence accumulated afterwards, although E. J. O. so modestly calls it the mere suspicion or flavour of a ghost.

I think the story has all the delightful circumstantiality of Mrs Veal's ghost, while in this case the behaviour was much more consistent with ghostly dignity than was that of the celebrated lady.

It would be interesting to trace the kind of ghosts that have been most in favour in different ages, and to see how they suited themselves to the tastes of the people they visited.

Those of the tapestry and ancient castle era seem to have been chiefly those of the most discreditable ancestors the dwellers in the castle could boast, and they seem to have been anxious to keep alive their bad names by pertinacious and malicious visitations, for the express purpose of terrifying (or worse) the unwary or unconscious trespassers in the rooms over which they kept guard. Probably, in those days of open violence and shameless crime, the milder and less offensive ghosts of more recent times would have been thought tame and uninteresting. Horror seemed a necessary part of the tales of the castle hall, either in actual violence on the part of the ghost, or at least in the shape of an appearance so hideous, as nearly to terrify out of his wits the unfortunate person visited.

To these there succeeded a race of ghosts of a very different order (not murderers, but not unfrequently murdered people), generally bent on securing justice, either against their enemies, or perhaps in the way of rectifying any piece of injustice of which they had been either guilty or cognisant while in the flesh.

After these, we may say ghosts, though not ghost stories, went out of fashion, and the place of the real hair-stirring stories was taken by those explained-away tales which are, to my mind, so poor a substitute. And now, all that the friends and clinging believers in the supernatural can do for their poor abashed friends, the ghosts, is eagerly to announce any unaccounted-for footstep, or sight, or sound that can possibly indicate that they still linger shyly about us.

Every now and then our hopes are raised by hearing of a flitting figure being observed, it may be on a staircase at midnight, or on a lawn in the moonlight; but, alas, the ghosts seem to be getting as timid as the ghost-seers. Can we not do anything before it is too late?

Let me make a proposal.

Let each member of our Society write out, at her leisure, the best ghost story she knows, or can get hold of, that has not been published before,—personal experiences, of course, to be preferred,—and let us have an extra number at Christmas made up of the best of them, that we may all "sup full of horrors."

I might hint at a small contribution, in the shape of a personal experience, from myself, only I hope there would be so many other narratives, much more thrilling, that my poor ghost, one of the modest kind, who is only heard, not seen, would have no chance of even a hearing there.

HERMIONE.

When two that love are parted.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GEIBEL

WHEN two that love are parted,
Two hearts that have been one,
On earth a greater sorrow
There surely can be none.
The words fall like a woeful knell:
Farewell, for evermore farewell!
When two that love are parted,
Two hearts that have been one.

When first I found that true love
Could ever pass away,
'Twas as the sun had vanished
In brightest hour of day.
Upon my wondering ear there fell,
Farewell, for evermore farewell!
When first I found that true love
Could ever pass away.

My spring-time has departed,
And this is why it fled,
The lips that once have kissed me
To me are cold and dead.

But one word clearly from them fell
Farewell, for evermore farewell!
My spring-time has departed,
And this is why it fled. VERONICA.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

TWO MUSICAL MEMOIRS.*

MISS KAY SHUTTLEWORTH, in her abridged translation of the work of C. H. Bitter, has here set before us all that is known of the life of Sebastian Bach; and, after all, it is disappointingly little. Only the external records of his life seem to have been preserved; a life marked by few and simple incidents, the greater part of which was passed at Leipzig, as Choir Master and Musical Director. Yet we may form for ourselves some idea of the character of the master; an idea in harmony both with the mighty works which he has left us, and with the fine expressive features of the portrait prefixed to this volume. We may imagine him of a calm and even temperament, which, however, could be raised to indignation at times, but could never descend to littleness, nor conceive of the spirit of petty intrigue that surrounded him. His mind was so entirely fixed on his own sublime art, that it never occurred to him to measure himself with common men; to enquire whether his compositions were merely for the advantage of his churches and pupils, or were destined to live for ever. He reaped but little fame or reward during his lifetime. Frederick the Great, indeed, did honour to himself by his cordial and graceful recognition of Bach; but the officials with whom he more often came in contact, seem to have played the usual part of mediocrity, and took advantage of their position to thwart and confine the impulses of genius. It is a remarkable coincidence, that Bach was born in the same year as Handel, 1685. His active and fertile life came to a close July 28, 1750.

There could scarcely be a greater contrast than that between the book just mentioned, and the light, agreeable gossip opened to us in the life of Moscheles. It is a pleasant glimpse of the world of music in the times immediately preceding our own, and as Moscheles lived for many years in London, we get amusing sketches of society there: of

* Life of Sebastian Bach. Life of Ignatz Moscheles.

those young ladies whose mammas begged for "something with a pretty time in it, brilliant, and not too difficult, and to whom the unhappy Moscheles in one year gave 1437 lessons: of the earlier days of the Philharmonic Society, and the difficulties under which he succeeded in bringing about the performance of the ninth symphony, "rehearsing every difficulty with each individual player," and being rewarded by a complete success: of concerts so badly organised that he writes "any one less thick-skinned than I was would have died straight off, but I could listen without so much as a fainting fit." He himself seems to have had no mean share in the improvement which, with all our shortcomings, has undoubtedly come to pass. He was a genuine musician, a brilliant pianiste, full of generous enthusiasm for those whom he rejoiced to acknowledge as his superiors. It is difficult to judge of his compositions, they are now so seldom heard; but probably his special gift was as an interpreter of music, and he had also a rare talent for improvisation. He was of a most amiable disposition, beloved by his contemporaries, and though he criticises freely, and with much point and humour, there is not a single ill-natured remark throughout the volumes. A more abiding interest is lent to the work by the letters and particulars relating to the death of Beethoven, and still more by the charming picture of Mendelssohn in all the genial ease of friendship. It is truly a privilege to be admitted into the bright cordiality of that artist life, in its best and highest form. We learn with interest that Mendelssohn's "Cradle Song" was written on the occasion of the birth of his godson, the eldest son of Moscheles, and was sent to him with a delightful picture of all the instruments of the orchestra gathered round the cradle of the music-heralded babe, as Mendelssohn himself explains it:—"the trumpets when he wants to become famous, the flutes when he falls in love, the cymbals* when he gets a beard; the pianofore explains itself, and should people ever play him false, as they will do to the best of us, there stand the kettle-drums and the big drums in the back-ground."

The Prize offered for the Best Poem appearing in the August, September or October number of The Attempt, has been awarded to "B." for her poem entitled "They were troubled, saying, It is a Spirit."

* German "Becken,"—Cymbals or Bason.

The Mermaid's Fountain.

Part V

(Conclusion.)

It was grey melancholy weather at Valmont. There was rain in the sky and wind on the sea, which was rough and gloomy without being positively stormy. De Frajon sat at the window of his little [illegible], looking out on the tossing waves, each with its cap of white foam, that tumbled in the bay, where the brown-sailed fishing boats were plunging and rolling out to sea. Since a week ago he had [illegible]. He then news of Raoul, and she had gone away with [illegible] and a sad face [illegible] nothing further, and had shrunk from going [illegible] him. He felt her confidence to him might be [illegible] recall, and had also recommended that the [illegible] at present only be mentioned in the family. He [illegible] soon hear from Raoul and, meanwhile, though there was nothing to say he had a strong suspicion of Michel, which came very near the truth. Jacques Lecœur, who was passing the wind whistling from the sea paused, leaning on the sill, to announce that his nephew's wife was to come as *bonne* into the house, for Madame Lecœur is to accompany Mademoiselle Gabrielle on a [illegible] journey. Monsieur Gaspard thought she would attend her better than a girl, and then she is so devoted to *la demoiselle*."

"Are they going to-day?" De Frajon enquired, and on his answering probably yes, he ordered the dog-cart, and set off for the farm with Joseph. Gabrielle was sitting on the door-step, looking straight before her, her face grey and cloudy as the weather. She received De Frajon with instinctive courtesy, asked him to come in out of the cold September breeze, and then sat silently in the *salon* gazing at the leaden sky.

"I hear you are going on a journey."

"Ye—yes, I [illegible] my uncle talk of a little voyage; now harvest is [illegible] are more free."

"Madame Lecœur is going with you?"

"Is she? I had not heard."

"I hope you will send me your address. I may have something very special to write to you. I [illegible] have hardly sufficiently shown you [illegible] Raoul [illegible] engagement.

'I do not see that Saul Gabriel could possibly have any right to leave Valmont still duly and truly bound to the real business with him.'

That is my skill. I tell a truth that is plausible, but not the truth which would be fatal to me. As I am much wished for at the supper-table, happy intimation in the household that Mr. Faith was expected to return to-day.

Neither young Mr. Vicomte have been successful in guessing Dr. Wachter's arrangements.

"I can assure you I tell you truly that I am sure your reasoning has now. I myself have such reason to regret hasty condemnations. I count on your friendship will let to you that I was most unfortunate right but also wise true attachment to me was over-ruled by urgent duty—by filial duty. When I know all I shall regret my ill-timed judgments. Raoul is a man who might be too sensitive and easily hurt perhaps, but that is unfaithful never: it was not in him; and he would not if you should ever know what has passed. Until this Meanwhile prove warmly your friend Michel.

As his name was pronounced Michel entered the room and the Colonel's face. Colonel said to him gave him her hand, saying, 'At all events Monsieur I shall never forget your kindness,' and Michel gaily escorted him to the door.

"I have just been saying" he remarked how very strange it is that Wachter's papers are all copies, and in the same hand, too. I think, hardly worth returning to you, sir.

"I wonder sir you do not avoid a subject which so evidently distresses my cousin," said Michel.

"Unless perhaps have them copied and send Wachter the originals" said the Colonel, glancing up at Michel, as he lit his cigar.

He changed countenance as he answered quickly, "How could I, without knowing his address?"

"You are right, sir" he answered in an indifferent tone —"how could you without knowing Wachter's address?"

Joseph remarked as they drove off,—"this place does monsieur no good now—*il ne faut pas tant se mêler des affaires du pays.*"

"Don't take me away yet," said his master, "we are only in the second volume of the romance."

Michel gazed after them, and if wishes could have done

tl C l nel ever th pr ipice, he w uld never have r ad d Valm nt alive Given an opportunity and he f lt l could hums lf stamp out that feeble but active vitality that cr s l all his plans, but now he returned t Gabrielle My v ry dear Gabrielle," he began, th r is s m thing which l ply concerns your uncle and through him yours It which has, I think, been two l k pt fr m y u Gaspard is waiting for you on the sh r will y u come out with me and I will explain all s w g t Oh Gabrielle l ours again now you have w k n d fr m this dream that f r so long has made y u ar l ss f the interests f y u best friends"

I will g with you Michel as you wish," she replied lly l aving th r m wh re she s on reappeared, wrapp d in her dark l d lasped with a handsome wr ught silver m rant and w aring a most becoming l ttl r d h d Put l r face never changed, she felt d ad l d and yet somehow turned to stone. Th h rt ul f her fath r had existed she now believed, l r fath r al ne, but th ars luring which his r m rs had l d r asur d y l r and the weeks which f llt h r d ll l hs m — with fresh vividness were s m uch l pt f h s lf th t there s med not enough l ft f r k p f ling, only a hard dry s nsation was hers, that everything was a mockery and a cheat. So she w ll d by Michel s id ver the wide stubble fields, and r ach d the top of the cliff ab ve the Mermaid's fountain late in the afternoon.

'Gaspard is down below waiting for us, will you descend?" said her cousin

Why should I?" she answered. "I hate the place. Yet if you wish it, *ça m'est égal*,"—and they began clambering down

"Why, surely there is an English yacht' and close inshore," she exclaimed, as they reached the refuge cavern, as she saw a trim yawl hove-to as near the shore as was safe in that weather

"No Gabrielle, not a yacht. Now hear all, for the last year your uncle has been smuggling, and on a large scale. The goods have been concealed in the inner cavern below, and thence carried up at night to the farm, and driven off by degrees. There is a cargo of wines and brandy for England, waiting for that vessel now. That meddlesome colonel suspects something, and will alarm the coastguard, *le sclerat*. This evening is Gaspard's last

chance, and to give him that chance—Oh! Gabrielle, I have ruined myself—but he is your uncle. I have diverted the coastguard elsewhere for to-night, but as that causes me to be untrue to my position—I have resigned it—the mayorship, the departmental jurisdiction—I have sacrificed my career for you, and will you do nothing for me?" And the old story followed as they gained the edge of the sea, and walked to the cavern. Some way within, a little trap-door usually concealed by a piled heap of shingle, stood open, disclosing a small inner cave. Gaspard stood by directing some of his labourers in the removal of small wine casks, and packets of lace, which now strewed the dry shingle of the outer cave. Madame Lecœur, seated on a little pile of luggage, sprang up as Gabrielle entered. "Oh! dear *demoiselle ça fait fremir*, does it not? to be here so late, even not alone. And so we are to go on a voyage to England—all of us."

"What is all this?" said Gabrielle to her uncle, who drew her aside.

"Gabrielle, have pity. I may escape to-night, and get all the goods on board, but if we fail, or if any one betrays me, I shall be arrested, imprisoned, fined. Will you suffer it? Michel has resigned all to help us, but he still asks your hand. Don't refuse him and drive him desperate, or he may take the line he tells me is his duty, and denounce me."

The old man was terribly agitated; Michel had worked well on his confused fears.

"Dear uncle, be calm; what is it you wish me to do?"

"That you should go with me, and Michel, and the *femme* Lecœur to Southampton to-night with the goods. Oh! Gabrielle, save me from prison. Who knows what that Colonel may ferret out? Michel won't come unless there is a chance of your accepting him."

"And, Gabrielle," said Michel advancing, "have *I* not been true? all your life you have been dearest to me. I have still the dispensation for our marriage. If we stay a few days at Southampton, we can marry without further legal trouble, and, if all is quiet, return to Valmont. Should not we who are the last of our family, stand by each other? Or do you always wish to be known as the *délaissée* of the too charming doctor?"

"I wonder," said she, "you wish to marry a woman who does not prefer you to other people."

"That will come, dearest," said Michel, "only let me go with you."

"Make him come," whispered Gaspard; "if he stays he may desert us. I am quite in his power."

Gabrielle looked round as if for help; De Frajou's warnings occurred to her, but nothing seemed worth striving for. The gloomy sky, as seen through the cavern mouth, was darkening into early twilight; the near measured plash of oars was heard, and, in another minute, several dark figures appeared at the entrance, and a voice in very British French called out,—"All right here; all is quiet outside."

"All right, Captain Elliot," said Michel to the weather-beaten old sailor who had spoken, and who was followed by others. "Quick with all these goods to the boats, and then we can follow."

"And these are my passengers," said the old man, with a sly glance at Gabrielle. "Is the pretty lady quite sure she wishes to go? Old Tom Elliot is not the man for a kidnapping plot."

"Nonsense, the lady goes with her uncle," said Michel; "and, Gabrielle, you will let me come too," he whispered.

"Can I prevent you?" she said. Meanwhile the men were carrying the goods out.

"You *will* let Michel come with you in the second boat, will you not, *cherie*," said Gaspard, as he followed the casks down to the boat. His goods were very dear to him, and Michel had persuaded him the coastguard were at his heels. It was a strange scene,—the flickering lanterns and outer daylight dimly showing the fantastic white pinnacles and fretted surface of the chalk and flint rock,—the men swiftly and noiselessly working under the orders of the old captain, who now and then glanced complacently at Gabrielle.

"Yes; go, sir," he said to Gaspard, "and the lady can go off in the next boat, and have the more time to make up her mind whether she wishes to sail with me; no unwilling passengers for me. I had one once, eh!" and he shoved his broad fist against Michel, and winked, "one who shall be nameless."

At this moment from outside the cavern sounded a scream,—long, loud, and shrill. Gabrielle and the others rushed out and perceived Madame Lecœur (who, as she afterwards said, had gone out to watch the boat push off) standing stiff and straight, with her mouth open, and both

hands pointing towards the Fontaine des Sirenes, some thirty paces off. Beside it stood a man, slightly built but broad-shouldered, dressed in grey, and with shining fair hair blowing about his head. Gabrielle's heart gave a choking throb, and then seemed to stand still, as she stretched out her hand as if to warn off the advancing figure,—"*C'est vous*," she gasped.

"*Oui, c'est bien moi*, Raoul Wachter," came in the old familiar voice, so long unheard, so long yearned for. But now was it joy, or anger, or terror that it brought her? However, he was by her side, and giving her an open letter,—"Read," he said, "read at once, and see how we were separated."

Madame Lecoeur recovered courage enough to rush away past them, and up the steep path beyond as if on wings.

"I think you have met my passenger before. Monsieur Michel," said Elliot with a grin. "I owed him the return voyage you see—I charge him nothing."

Gabrielle was attentively reading the letter in the waning light. Raoul stood watching her earnestly. Michel stepped between; "Come, Gabrielle, come," he said, "we have no time to lose; leave this man to his own wife."

Raoul turned upon him in a moment.

"Villain! and you dare to let your voice be heard here—to her—you whose lies have wrecked two lives;" and he had him by the throat at once. The Mayor was a big, strong, burly man, and grappled with his antagonist, who, however, almost directly flung him off, and down where the deep water washed the rocks, and he plunged over and over, spluttering in the pool. He rose again—a sorry sight; Raoul was standing over him, with flushed cheeks and lighted eyes, lashed into fury. Gabrielle followed him and laid her hand on his shoulder. "Not now—not to-day," she said; and Raoul spoke. "Go, then, with your infamy, your name I remember is Talbot, but if ever you dare to return to Fécamont—mark me—I will denounce you, and the very children shall point at you for the liar and the traitor that you are."

"Good heavens! Doctor, be quiet," said Elliot, "let us have law and order; get him away or there will be murder done." This to some men who were dragging Michel out of the water and into the little boat, coughing, swearing, and struggling. "Indeed you had better go,

Monsieur Michel—least said soonest mended in your part of this affair."

Raoul turned round; the little hand was still on his shoulder. "Gabrielle!" he said, and there was a world of question in his tone.

"*C'est toi,*" she replied, and, in the delicate French idiom, the *toi* answered all he asked.

"Oh! Gabrielle, pardon. I could not help it; I could not help knocking him down!"

"Well, he is safe off," said Elliot, "and sir, I have brought you honestly back to the very place I took you from, and with a better will. You see," he continued, turning to Gabrielle, "I met this gentleman on Southampton pier, wild for a passage to Valmont, and the Grandport steamer did not sail for two days. So I knew him again, and told him I was bound to the Fontaine des Sirénes itself, and how my cabin was fitted up for the lady M. Michel intended to marry; but it was all otherwise ordained. Time is up—good evening and all good wishes." He shook hands warmly with Raoul, and followed his men into the boat, which shoved off, and they were gone. No one was left, and a wild squall of wind and rain rushed past, blotting out all the world round them from Raoul and Gabrielle. Raoul drew her into his arms; she had hitherto gone through all her troubles with great composure and fortitude, but now it was with her as with Dante, the ice congealed about her heart seemed to melt into tears, and she clung to him weeping convulsively. Raoul's own equanimity was quite at fault, and more than the rain-drops dimmed his eyes as he kissed the drooping head, and tried to whisper to her to take courage, for all the sorrow was over now—and they need never be separated again—never. He led her out of the blinding rain into the shelter of the cavern, and they sat down side by side on a rocky ledge, almost silent at first from very excess of feeling. Everything was cleared away; the pebbles and weed were raked up against the trap-door. Without, as the squall passed off, against a low bar of yellow light on the horizon, the yawl could be seen scudding fast away before the wind with closely reefed sails. The rising tide thundered on the jagged rocks, the chill wind whistled and moaned in the cavern laden with brine, the gulls shrieked and wailed hoarsely as they flew from rock to sea; but what recked Gabrielle of the cold and damp and

gloom, as she nestled close to Raoul, realising by degrees her own happiness, and hearing more than his letter could tell of the sorrowful past. His wife, who had for some time previously fallen into ill health, had died a few months ago, during his absence at the seat of war in Mexico; and he had then resolved upon returning to his own country with his little boy, as soon as he could wind up his affairs. On his arrival at Doctor Holt's house two days previously, he had found De Frajou's letter, with the wonderful news from Valmont, that had filled him with mingled joy and consternation at his mistake. He hurried straight off to Southampton, and there met old Elliot, who had given him a passage. On the way he had learned about Michel's last plan.

"Should you have married him?" he asked.

"Possibly," she answered. "An hour ago I cared so little what became of me, a man with a purpose might have induced me to do almost anything."

"That was my case; ah, you were fortunate at least to escape a loveless marriage. I did not dare to seek for Valmont news. Had I heard what I always feared to hear, that you were unhappy with Michel, it would have driven me wild. After that dreadful day, when I read the lie which divided us, I thought it best we should meet no more, at least for many years. Of her I wish to speak no more; she loved me once and she is dead; but I could not trust her. The little Gabrielle is charming, you will delight in him."

[illegible] talked for a while, till Gabrielle, starting to her [illegible] exclaimed, "Let us go home while there is a [illegible] of daylight; and, O Raoul! I forget the time [illegible] there was already breaking round the [illegible] inside, but Raoul carried Gabrielle through the dash of the wave, and together they began to ascend the [illegible] rocky path, while she clung to the arm whose support had been so sorely [illegible] with overpowering sensation of rest and bliss.

"Is it possible," she said, as they neared the [illegible] "that not three hours ago I was walking here with Michel, and oh such a heavy heart!

"Is it possible that I am walking with you here [illegible] nothing, not all had happened! [illegible] Oh! I hope not the [illegible] presentiment, Gabriel [illegible] commencement to [illegible]

hospitals; you will have I fear, to travel a good deal, to Algiers, where not; though *I* think Valmont a land to live and die in—*centinaire* and unaided by the doctor."

"I, on the contrary, wish to see the world, especially Algiers and the wars. Alsace I have seen, and the corn there is magnificent."

"Normandy is the land for corn. Oh! my darling, what our last little mock quarrel cost me!"

"Yet I feel that you knew, like me, *au fond du coeur*, that it was nothing at all," she replied.

Near the farm they were met by a nervous procession of men and maids, Madame Lecœur ready for instant flight, bringing up the rear. As the light of the lantern borne in front fell on Raoul, alarmed whispers went round. "It is he sure enough, a *revenant?* Yes, dripping wet as the drowned always appear."

"*Oui, me voici,*" said Raoul "a *revenant* with a valise which he will trouble you to carry;" and he tossed the article in question to a reassured servant; and soon then all was congratulation and welcome. A hot supper was spread at the farm, and Raoul and Gabrielle, as they sat by the blazing wood fire, could now look at each other at leisure. Beyond the development from youth and girl into man and woman, they were little changed, though more of intellect in his face, and more of sweetness in hers there certainly was. Suddenly at supper, for the first time, they remembered Gaspard, poor old Gaspard, who now was tossing on the stormy sea, a victim to his overcaution. "And I wonder how they will arrange themselves on board," laughed Raoul, "without the principal personage."

There came a ring at the bell, and Joseph was announced. He had driven up with inquiries from his master, who had heard wild reports in the village. Raoul thought it best to drive down with him, Gabrielle and he agreeing to meet at the eight o'clock mass the following morning.

Warmly did the Colonel welcome his old friend, though it cost Raoul a pang, even on this evening of rapture, to see the change from the once dashing officer to a feeble invalid.

"So, here you are in the body, *mon cher*," he said. "Do you know I heard that your ghost had risen up by the Fontaine and borne away Gabrielle, and the mermaid

herself had appeared, and with a shriek that was heard at Valmont, hurled the mayor into the sea."

"Madame Lecœur and I were the mermaid; she did the shrieking, and I the hurling; but the mayor is all right, he has sailed with the smugglers and Gaspard Talbot, who sees all the coastguard at his heels."

"So they will be if he goes on with these tricks," answered the Colonel. "I saw they had a hiding place in that cave, and meant they should only clear off this cargo before exposing it. Indeed, I told that precious mayor as much, who, however, has had the grace to resign."

All was explained before the two friends separated for the night, but Raoul accompanied Joseph, when he took in his master's coffee, early in the morning.

"Naturally I have not slept," he said, "and now, as you wish it, I should like to see you professionally."

When the examination was over, Raoul said somewhat sadly, "I think, yes, I am sure, I can give you more ease, and there *may* be great improvement, as long as a strong impulse from without stimulates the vitality; a half foundered boat will often keep afloat, if she will steer and has way on her."

"You have taken the wind out of my sails by ending your romance so comfortably, doctor; you must take me back to Algiers for excitement, and, meanwhile, do something to amuse me; bring Gabrielle here to breakfast, and sing some of your old German songs, if you still have your voice. Sing the *Lied von der Ruhe*." Raoul opened the piano, and sung to a rich sweet old German air.

"Im arm der Liebe ruht sich's wohl
Wohl auch im Schoosz der Erde;
Ob's dort noch oder hier sein soll
Wo ruhe ich finden werde?
Das forscht mein Geist und sinnt und denkt
Und pflegt zur Vorsicht die es lengt.
Im Schoosz der Erde ruht sich's wohl
So still und ungestöret
Hier ist das Herz oft Kummervoll
Dort wird's durch nichts geschweret
Man schlaft so sanft so still und süss
Hinüber in das Paradies."

The words of the song expressed what both felt, but neither cared to put into words. Raoul played on in silence long dreamy chords, till he said, "I must go, I promised to meet Gabrielle at the *messe basse*."

"Go, and thank God for one of the best of gifts—a good wife," said De Frajou.

It was Sunday morning,—a bright and breezy September day; and the fine old Carillion was ringing, Mary, Joseph, and George, as the bells were called, whose voices were known and loved far out at sea. How often had Raoul heard them in his mind, as now in truth. While avoiding the main thoroughfare, he sped up the narrow lanes, past flowery hedges and scattered cottages towards the massive grey church, which stood alone in a grassy valley, somewhat retired from the little town that lay between it and the sea. And, down the little turfy hill, he could see Gabrielle coming the straight way from the farm. Her freshest bloom seemed glowing in her cheeks again; her dark velvet bodice, *point d'Alençon* cap, and rich gold ornaments, were most becoming, as she hastened to him with a bright smile and outstretched hands.

"This morning I thought it was all a dream again," she said, "the dream of your return I have awakened from so often; but it is true—true, and the sunshine of the old days has returned."

"And I grew nervous when you were out of my sight," said Raoul. "Of course this must not last, we must have a word with the curè before mass; as to the contract, it was all drawn out ten years ago, and only wants dating and signing. We are too busy to wait: I am a consulting surgeon, you know, and you have Leon de Frajou and little Gabriel to look after at once."

An hour later they had left the church, and were walking arm in arm down the *Grande Rue*, which was thronged with people, all *endimanchè*, and most excited by the great news of the night before. So many congratulations and marvellous questions about the Siren were pressed upon the doctor, that he felt some explanation to be necessary, so he turned at the door of the Colonel's lodging, lifted his hat, and thanked the neighbours warmly; and then continued,—"That I am here again I owe to Colonel de Frajou, who found out where I was and how I had been deceived. It is true that I was detained two years a prisoner in Algeria; but I should not, after that, have remained eight years in America, had I not had false information that Mademoiselle Gabrielle was married. She allows me, however, to say now that she soon will be; and I have to ask pardon for taking her away. But I have no rancour against our Siren; she holds her cup of pure water to all comers; is

it her fault if strange guests come? In the old war times, the English ships used to go there for water, as I have been told by sailors who were present; doubtless they sometimes took prisoners, and this, I believe, is the real foundation of the legend of the Siren."

And so, amid acclamations and congratulations, they passed indoors; and there were no two happier people that day in all France than the guests of the sympathetic Colonel de Frajou.

"Well, mademoiselle," he remarked, "which of us guessed rightly about the doctor? I can read faces, and I would have pledged my own honour from the very first for that of the horseman who rode up to warn us of the ambuscade in Algeria."

Little remains to be told. Gaspard Talbot came home in a fortnight by the steamer, if not a wiser man, at least more disposed to submit to his niece's wisdom.

When he reached the Grande Ferme in the evening, and asked for mademoiselle, the servant, with a grin, replied—"She is no more, but Monsieur le Docteur and Madame Wachter are at home, and have Monsieur De Frajou to dinner." There sat Gabrielle at the head of the table, a radiant matron, her little faired-haired step-son by her side. They had delayed their departure for Paris till Gaspard's return,—Paris, where the rising surgeon was now expected, and where there was no longer any question of a little lodging *au quatrième*.

Michel Talbot never returned to Valmont, but as he had money and astuteness, he probably throve somewhere in the eyes of the world. Captain Elliot retired on his gains, and lived in Scotland, highly respected, and an elder of the kirk. The farm is let now, save one suite of rooms where Doctor Wachter and his wife and family often spend their summer holidays; but he has been all his life too busy and too much in request, to stay long at a time in that remote country place. This is a brief record of some of the early days of one of the chief surgeons of France, and we must not pursue the story too far if we wish it to end well, or we shall find again the mingling of good and evil fortune that belongs to human life. Suffice it to say, that Raoul and Gabrielle were most happy in their marriage, that the little Gabriel was as much treasured by her as her own beautiful children, and that they enjoyed above all things the time they could spare for their retreat at Valmont from the

cares of a busy life. One of the tall Ogive windows in the lantern tower of the church has been given by them—St Leon, and St Louis armed *cap-à-pie* in the desert, fill the two lights, and above are blazoned the extinct arms of Frajou Rocheambeau.

And the Siren! Her exploits are now a thing of the past, but perhaps they are none the less thrilling in tradition and report; and the witching scenery is all unchanged. Still the lonely rock column in the sea seems to mark off an enchanted land, and through the cavern mouth strange formations show in fantastic light and shadow, and the rippling shower still sparkles over the velvet moss, in the haunted solitude of the Mermaid's Fountain.

E. J. O.

(CONCLUDED.)

The Burn in Winter.

THE stainless snow wrapped all below,
From above the sunlight streamed;
And, fair to view, through a mist of blue,
The pearly Pentlands gleamed.

Stirred not a breeze in the frosted trees,
But all was hushed and still,
As if life were dead, and its shroud were spread
Spotless o'er field and hill.

Black as a pall seemed the ivied wall,
Where the snow in fragments clung;
The frozen pond slept dark beyond,
With icicles o'erhung.

The pathway led where the trees o'erhead
Will hide the skies in spring;
And music there, on the frosty air,
From the dell rose murmuring,

For the merry stream, with a sunny gleam,
As it raced so far away,
A defiance tossed to the chaining frost
To hush one ripple gay.

The beams that played through the leafless glade,
It caught them, and it cast
A golden glow to the cold white snow,
Like a smile, as it hurried past.

The glen was steep and the snow was deep,
But the burn was singing still,
As blythe a tune, as if lavish June
Strewed flowers upon the hill.

Brave stream sing on, till the snows are gone,
And daisies shall star the brae,
And violets drink at thy sunny brink,
And primroses breathe of May.

Like the heaven-fed life, that, when storms are rife,
And mid-winter's bleakest chill
Binds each fair thing that from earth can spring,
Liveth and singeth still.

Yes, singeth on, though the flowers are gone,
And liveth though all are dead,
And smileth on woe, with a heaven-caught glow,
From the unseen glory shed.

It never dries 'neath summer skies,
Nor freezeth with winter's breath;
Music it makes in the heart that breaks,
And singeth of life, in death.

Unseen its source,—its mystic course
Unchained by the frosts of earth,
Flows on in strength till it springs, at length,
To HIS throne who gave it birth.

OMICRON.

Milla Forres:

A TALE OF THE FORTY FIVE

CHAPTER XXIV

CULLODEN

"Nancy," said Barbara, when they had left old Lauchlan's cottage, and were on their way home again, "I must find out this Rab MacDougal, and see what he can tell me about poor Maggie. Did you ever hear a sadder story?"

"Yes it was very sad, but how can you find out Rab, Barbara? Old Lauchlan does not even know whether he is alive or not and even if he is, he is away somewhere in Perthshire, besides, it is so long ago. What good would it do even if you did find him. All could find no trace of Maggie, even immediately after she had gone away, so how can you hope to get news of her now?"

"I don't know," said Barbara, "it does seem rather hopeless, I confess; but I must do all I can to keep my promise to Peggy, and in the first place, I must find Rab"

Barbara spoke determinedly, as one who had quite made up her mind, and accustomed to yield to her sister's strong nature, Nancy made no further remonstrance. I think, unconsciously to herself, Barbara's determination to seek for Maggie till she had found her, if she were still alive, however hopeless the task might seem, and however many difficulties might lie in the way of its accomplishment, owed something of its strength to a half acknowledged feeling that if she was to live at all, she *must* keep herself from brooding over the irrecoverable past and the dreary future; she must fill the present so full of absorbing interests, that she should have no time to consume her own heart with unavailing regrets,—and she clutched at this commission of old Peggy's, very much as a drowning man at any straw that floats near him, and which seems to offer him a hope of safety.

When the girls reached Milla Forres that bright April afternoon, they found strange news awaiting them.

During their absence, a horseman had arrived in breathless haste, bringing a letter from Colonel Forbes full of sad tidings. The Jacobite army was defeated and in retreat, the cause was lost, and Prince Charles in hiding. Colonel Forbes was well and unhurt, but he dared not return to his own house. He was, however, sending Alaster Macdonald there, who was severely wounded. The Macdonalds had been annoyed at being placed on the left instead of the right wing in the battle, and had refused to charge along with their leaders. Alaster's uncle, the brave Macdonald of Kippoch, had been killed; his father also had been killed; and he himself was severely wounded. He was insensible, Colonel Forbes added while he was writing, but the doctors expressed good hopes of his recovery if he could have care and constant nursing. Not knowing how to secure this otherwise, Colonel Forbes had ordered him to be conveyed to Milla Forres, where he was sure old Elspet and his daughters would do their best for him. Colonel Forbes must himself remain in hiding for a time. Alaster would be brought by easy stages, and would probably not arrive at Milla Forres for two or three days after the messenger who brought the tidings. The letter was addressed to Barbara, but the ill news had spread through the house before the girls reached it through the messenger, and when they arrived, Elspet was wringing her hands, and gesticulating, and bemoaning "bonny maister Alaster," in her wild highland fashion. It was no use trying to break the thing gently to Nancy, so Barbara just put her father's letter in her hand. The poor girl grew paler and paler as she read, and when she came to the end, she staggered forward a few steps, and fell fainting in her sister's arms.

"Eh, the puir lamb, it'll juist clean kill her," moaned Elspet, fussing about to get restoratives for the insensible girl.

Barbara herself was as white as a ghost, and trembled as in a fit of ague; but she did not faint or speak, but quietly set about bringing Nancy round. The old motherly protecting tenderness had crept back to her heart as she saw her little sister's grief, and anew the resolution rose in her mind that, whatever came of this strange complication of affairs, Nancy's happiness should be cared for. Nancy should never know. It was not till Nancy had been recovered from her fainting fit, and put

to bed, and finally had cried herself to sleep, and Ishbel's eager questions about the Prince's fortunes and Colonel Forbes' plans had been answered, and all her wailings over the Jacobite defeat and Alaster's wound had been patiently listened to, that Barbara found time to think quietly by herself over this strange new complication. She knew well enough that if Alister had been sensible he would have crept away home to Perthshire: he would never have thought of coming to Milla Forres in the present state of affairs, yet much as in many ways she dreaded his coming a strange thrill of pleasure passed through her heart as she thought that she should see him once more, that she might nurse and comfort him, and that it could not be wrong for her to do so: it was plainly her duty. It had come to her, not by her own seeking or by his, but evidently as it seemed to her by the will of God. Her heart had been so hungry all these months, and now, for a little while at least it would be filled. Then the thought came and almost sickened her with fear—What if his wound were mortal? What if he should die on the way? What if, when his bearers reached Milla Forres they should bring with them not Alaster—her own Alister—but his corpse? But she would not dwell on the thought: it was too horrible. Her father said the doctors had good hopes of him. Why should she frighten herself with such a dreadful nightmare? I do not think the idea occurred to her that he could die *after* he reached Milla Forres: all her fears concentrated themselves on the dangers of the journey. I think she felt almost as if once there he was in her own hands, and she would *make* him live. Poor, desperate human love, that *feels* so all-powerful, and is yet so impotent to save!

In the meantime she turned all her energies to getting a room ready for the sufferer. He must have the pleasantest and brightest room in the house. It must be on the ground floor, to avoid the pain of carrying him upstairs, and that he might the sooner be able to step into the garden when his convalescence (which she looked for so certainly) should begin. It must look out to the garden and the mountains, and catch every gleam of the spring sunshine. There was one room, and only one, in Milla Forres, which met all these requirements. It was a little room, opening from the great hall, which had been her mother's boudoir, and which the girls often used as a summer parlour. It had never been used as a common

family sitting-room since her mother's death, for Colonel Forbes, a silent, brooding, melancholy man, who had loved his dead wife passionately, and whose heart seemed to have been buried in her grave,—for he had never seemed to care much for any human creature since,—had always avoided the room filled for him with so many associations. There his dead wife's picture hung, taken in her young, fresh girlhood, a few months after her marriage, in her satin marriage dress, with its antiquated lace ruffles. There were the quaint fire-screens, worked in silk, that he remembered her fair face bending over, and looking up from to smile on him on many a happy evening. There was the couch to which he had so often carried her, with a bitter pain in his heart, that she might look out on the bright little patch of garden and the great solemn hills beyond, and bask for a little in the warm summer sunshine, when it had become evident to him that his fragile flower was fading. The room and its recollections were too painful for the silent, undemonstrative man, whom no one would have imagined (so cold and dignified was his aspect now) could ever have been capable of strong feeling. I have often wondered how many of those cold, dignified, silent people one meets in this world, are so because they have consumed their hearts in one great conflagration, and in it had up all the fuel which should have lasted them for their lifetime, and left themselves cold, and dreary, and indifferent. It is not right that it should be so; I think it hardly *will* be so in any nature that is truly great or generous. From the ashes of the great conflagration, such a nature will, I think, heap up embers, not to gladden his own heart, but at whose glow every cold and weary wayfarer may rest and warm himself, and bless the great heart that, out of the wreck of its own personal happiness, has kindled a fire to comfort others. But Colonel Forbes' nature was not great enough for this. When his own personal happiness went out in the blackness of death, his hearth was simply fireless. He had been kind to his daughters, and indulgent to them, but it was with a kindness and indulgence in which there was no warm personal love; and so, solicitous as he was for their well-being, he had never been much to either of them. He had never entered his wife's boudoir since her death, but he had made no objections to his daughters using it as their summer sitting-room; the only provision he had made, being that the old furniture

should remain as it was And this room had been a great favourite with the girls Barbara especially who remembered her mother used often to come there, and sit looking at the sweet girlish face in the picture and dreaming over the young life that had been so quickly ended The room was to her a sort of holy place and I think, this as well as its suitability otherwise, was what made her now resolve to give it up to Alaster She liked to associate him with that dear dead mother She would have shrunk from giving that room up to any one else but it seemed quite natural and fit to give it up to *him* So with Elspet's willing help she set about getting it ready as a sick-room for the sufferer

CHAPTER XXV

ALASTER'S HOMECOMING

THREE days of anxious waiting followed the arrival of the messenger from Colonel Forbes Nancy had grown thin and pale with weeping and fasting for they could persuade her to take little food All energy seemed to have gone out of her with the terrible anxiety and she spent most of the time in tears Not but what she tried to bear up poor little Nancy and to hope for the best and sometimes a sort of April smile seemed to break through her sorrow, but she was a fragile little thing not fit for rough blasts or stormy weather a sweet delicate spring blossom just made to smile and rejoice in the sunshine but which the first bitter wind was sure to lay prostrate on the ground Barbara on the other hand as her nature was, only struck her roots deeper when the storm howled about her All her old energy had returned with the emergency Only her eyes seemed to have grown larger and more spiritual in these days of intense anxiety

At last—what a long time it seemed they had waited—on the evening of the third day, Elspet ran breathless into the hall where the girls were sitting

"They're coming, Miss Barbara, they're coming! I see them at the fit o' the avenue, they hae a litter wi' them Guid keep and save us, may the bonny lad be leevin!"

Nancy grew as pale as death, and began to tremble from head to foot.

"What nonsense, Elspet," said Barbara, "of course he is alive. See, you have frightened Nancy," she added reproachfully. Then going up to Nancy, she put her arm round her waist, and drawing her towards the door, she said, "Come, Nancy, you must be the first to welcome him." By the time they got to the door, the little procession was already at the foot of the steps, and one of the soldiers came up, and respectfully saluting the young ladies, said, "He is asleep, ma'am, if possible it would be well not to wake him, the doctor said much depended on his sleeping."

"Very well," said Barbara, "carry him as gently as you can to his room, I will shew you the way," and she turned into the house.

Now that he was really here and alive, the reaction from the terrible strain of the last few days threatened to begin, and Barbara felt as she walked as if her limbs would hardly support her. But she put down the threatening weakness with a resolute will, and led the way silently to her mother's boudoir. There they laid down the litter gently by the side of the couch which had been prepared for the sufferer. And the anxious group caught their first glimpse of the poor changed face. Elspet wrung her hands in dismay at the sight, and Nancy clung to Barbara's arm, sick and half fainting. Cruelly changed, indeed, it was, that pale sleeping face. A sword cut had gashed it from brow to chin, and it was bound up now in white linen cloths. No one would have known handsome Alaster Macdonald in the ghastly face lying before them. All his clustering dark curls had been shaved off, and the scared countenance, pale and haggard, seemed to have no resemblance to the bright face they had known so well. Barbara stood silently looking on it for some moments. For the first minute she felt deadly sick—surely it was not her own Alaster who lay there so sadly changed? She could hardly realize it at first, but by-and-bye as she gazed, something in the poor disfigured face recalled the countenance that had grown so dear to her, some flitting trace of a smile that passed over the pale lips sent a thrill through her heart, and careless who might be looking at her, she stooped down and kissed the poor scarred brow, her tears falling fast as she did so. Then she turned to Nancy, and saying gently,

"Nancy dear, I think we had better leave him till he

wakes, he will not seem so changed then," she led her gently from the room.

It was many days before that awaking came, for from the dead sleep in which he was on his arrival, Alaster passed into feverish delirium, and for days and nights the sisters and Elspet watched him tossing and moaning on his pillow, and rambling in incoherent sentences over the terrible scenes he had lately passed through. Mingled with his ravings of the battle field and the camp, came sometimes passionate words of love, and often the names of the two sisters who sat watching him so anxiously. Barbara trembled often, lest his rambling words should betray the secret to Nancy,—it was so plain to herself in many of them; but Nancy had no idea of the real state of the case, and when Barbara's name occurred where her own name should properly have been, she put it down simply to the incoherence of delirium. Elspet, however, was keener-sighted, and Barbara caught her gray eyes watching her curiously when Alaster had uttered some passionate word coupled with the name of the elder sister. Barbara herself always seemed to consider it nothing more than the ravings of delirium, and her perfect self-possession somewhat threw Elspet off the scent; nevertheless, the old woman was uneasy and perplexed, and watched matters keenly. Another pair of sharp eyes and ears were watching also, with faculties sharpened by strong personal feeling. Dr Brown was of course in constant attendance upon the sufferer, and very soon he discovered not only that Alaster loved Barbara, but that Barbara loved Alaster. A bitter pang shot through his patient, manly heart, as he made the discovery, for, hopeless as he had always taught himself to believe his own love was, perhaps he had clung more to the faint possibility that at some future time, when he should have risen in his profession, he might at last venture to confess the passion that lay deeper in his heart, than he himself was quite aware of. Be that as it may, to know that Barbara's heart was given to another, sent a bitter pang, on his own account, to his; and the thought that it was given to a man who was plighted to another, filled him with generous pain for her. He knew so well himself what the pain of a hopeless love was, and he knew Barbara too well to imagine that her love for her sister's betrothed, could seem other than a hopeless love to her. His heart so

ached for her, this bright, beautiful woman, for whom he would so gladly have given his life, and whom he felt so helpless to aid, or even to comfort in this time of her extremity. It so yearned over her often, as he stood by her side at Alaster's bedside, and saw the anxious eyes that sought so eagerly to read in his, the unspoken verdict on the sufferer's state; and she—she hardly noticed him! She was grateful to him for his care and attention to Alaster, that was all! Sometimes he smiled half bitterly to himself as he rode away; the ludicrous side of the subject struck him, and he could not help laughing at himself, and what he called his own folly, but his heart was sad enough underneath the laughter. In his unselfish, generous heart, the resolution arose that he would keep watch and ward over this woman who never thought of him; that he would be by her to help in all trouble, unostentatiously, silently, with no hope of thanks even, just for the sake of his great love for her. Thank God, there is love like this sometimes, even in this common-place, work-a-day world, and the thought that there is so, may well save us from despairing even of our poor fallen humanity.

JEANIE MORISON.

(*To be continued.*)

Our Debates.

DOES it ever occur to our readers, on looking at the outside of our Magazine, and there seeing that it is printed for the *Ladies' Edinburgh Literary Society*, to ask what does this *Literary Society* do? Does it exist only to conduct this little magazine, and if so, in what does it differ, except in degree, from a mere staff of writers engaged as contributors to any other magazine?

If such questions have ever suggested themselves to our readers, it may interest them to hear a little of in what our work as a Literary Society consists besides the production of our Magazine, which, though the chief part, is not all the work which we now try to do. No; our Magazine, intended originally for the training of young writers, has gradually gathered around it a cluster of ladies, who, though for the

most part studiously inclined, are not all aspirants to authorship These latter have been attracted to us less by our Magazine, then by our debates, which are held monthly by the members of our Society

These debates have been of gradual growth. How well we remember our first efforts in this direction It had been suggested that our monthly meetings, held at first simply to arrange matters connected with the Magazine, might, with advantage, be wound up with some discussion of subjects, literary, social, or otherwise Acting on this suggestion, a subject was given out at one meeting for discussion at the next Very crude and youthful was our first attempt, with no special speakers appointed to open the discussion, but all left to speak as they might be moved at the moment. Soon, however, the advantage of securing the services of one member, who should introduce the subject with some prepared remarks, was discovered, and thus the first step was made

Among our earliest subjects, I remember, were, "Strong-minded women," "The character of Cromwell,' and (young people are apt to venture out of their depth) "Is Virtue Teachable?" Sometimes an awful pause would occur, when no one would venture to address the company, at other times whispering, or at best, partial conversations would arise, in which the President, forgetful of the dignity of her chair, would occasionally take part

However, "Rome was not built in a day," and undaunted we pursued our work, gradually evolving a certain degree of order out of chaos The President's duties were more clearly defined. Speakers were appointed to open the two sides of each question chosen for discussion, to be followed by seconders, and finally our discussions assumed the name and character of debates. For several years now, *The Attempt*, besides doing in its own special work, has served as a nucleus, around which a Debating Society has formed itself Though much remains to be done in encouraging speakers to address the meeting without a too constant use of notes, and in impressing on all the advantage of reading up the subject of the day's debate, so as to be able to take an intelligent part in the discussion, still progress has been made.

We think we may venture to say that the Debates of this closing year have been very satisfactory; but as we are aiming at improving ourselves, a few critical remarks about them may not be out of place.

We notice that the literary questions are the easiest to deal with Many of our Members can give us a very good little essay or criticism of the works of some well-known author: and most have intelligent reasons to give for their opinions in the discussion which follows. It is interesting to elicit what are the sources of the enjoyment some authors give us, and the reasons of our want of sympathy with others.

The debates on ethical subjects are less manageable, and remind us

sometimes of an encounter of two knights at a tournament, who miss each other when their spears should clash, and who gallop to the oppsite side of the arena without having met at all, having merely succeeded in giving their hobbies a gallop. Each party praises a quality the antagonist has not thought of undervaluing, and attacks a position that is not defended by the other side. And even when the two principal champions are in opposition and understand each other's position sufficiently to attack it, and have detected where the real question, the real point of difference, lies, we sometimes hear in the discussion which follows a good deal of miscellaneous talk, showing that, from want of consideration of the subject, the point of difference has been undetected by many of the speakers, for, indeed, it often needs a good deal of reflection to ascertain the exact point where two sets of opinions on any given subject diverge. When sometimes the premises are, or are assumed to be, the same the conclusions are glaringly different. Any newspaper will, in plenty of its leading articles, give us excellent practice in detecting where the real point of the question lies, which is concealed from the careless reader by the skill of the writer. We shall take a fine easy example from a leading article the other day, criticising some recent criticisms of Mill's Autobiography. He was prejudiced in early life against all religion, so strongly, said the critic, that he really was not a fair judge of religion. Stop, says the newspaper, this cuts both ways; you have been so prejudiced by early training against unbelief, that you can be no fair judge of it. This seems absurd, but why, when we admit the premiss of early prejudice do we reject the conclusion? Because, we reply to the newspaper, we can be prejudiced against something, but we cannot allow it possible, in anything like the same degree, against nothing at all—a mere negation. Say you are brought up in a household where the people have no ear for music, believe it to be an idle, debasing, trifling pursuit, and have raked up every story in its disfavour, and all that can be said against it that they can find; would you not, unless specially gifted, probably start in life with a prejudice against music? Take the converse of a very musical family. They might think others devoid of a sort of sixth sense, full of beauty and depth to them; but would intercourse with them be likely to prejudice you against the converse of music, silence, inharmoniousness, nothing at all? And yet there is a residuum of truth at the bottom of the argument, that the other side would probably allow; that prejudice is of no party or school, and that a little of it spices very generally our views of the doings of the opposite side.

This little residuum of truth on the side we disagree with, is a thing that in all the questions we discuss should be sought for and not forgotten. But we do not think we compliment ourselves too highly when

we say that great fairness and a desire to understand the opposite position characterises our debates.

A word as to delivery, we should remember that we are rather trying to persuade an audience than to read a cut and dried essay. Few of us could, perhaps, with advantage, dispense altogether with the use of notes, but we need not be slaves to them. We should never forget our hearers, and, as we go, we should endeavour to find and mark the arguments we hope may most tell with them

But what is the use, I hear some contemptuous critic exclaim, of you ladies practising those acts of public speaking, which, thank heaven, you are not likely ever to need in public, and in private save and defend us from argumentative ladies! Granted, cynical querist, but still besides the interest and amusement our debates give us, and the research into interesting subjects they induce, we cannot willingly allow that they are useful for nothing. Is it nothing that ladies even should have some skill in finding out when there is a difference of opinion, where the difference lies, and whether it is real or only apparent, and if they discover it to be real, to be content to differ? Is it nothing that, instead of reiterating former arguments in support of their own views, they should be taught when once they are stated, to consider they have spoken? Is it nothing that they should learn to give reasons for their opinions, to respect the opinions of others, to disagree without bitterness, and to discuss questions without clamour, without heat, and with unscrupulous fairness? Indeed, we think the argumentative woman of popular aversion, would have no success in our debates

It may not be without interest to our readers to hear what exactly have been the subjects of our debates this year, therefore we shall bring our remarks to a close with a list of the subjects, and a note of the majority of votes recorded in favour of either the affirmative or negative side of each question

I Was Claverhouse guilty of unnecessary cruelty to the Covenanters? Majority for the Affirmative, six.

II Is mental philosophy more deserving of study than physical? Majority for the Affirmative, twelve.

III. Does the social happiness of mankind increase with the increase of civilization? Majority for the Affirmative, eight.

IV Is youth the happiest period of life? Majority for the Negative, four.

V. Is music a higher art than painting? Majority for the Affirmative, fourteen

VI. Is Tennyson superior as a poet to Browning? Majority for the Affirmative, thirteen.

VII. Is genius preferable to application? Majority for the Affirmative, six.

VIII. Is perfect sincerity compatible with perfect politeness? Majority for the Affirmative, two

IX. Is the will free? Majority for the Affirmative, eighteen.

X. Is George Eliot the greatest novelist of this reign? To be debated this month.

EX CATHEDRA.

A Prize is offered for the best Prose Article appearing in the February number of *The Attempt*. Competitive Articles should be with the Editor by the 5th of January.